The Acts of Great Athanasius, *&c.*

THou *shalt have no other Gods but Me*, saith God himself, in the words of the First Commandment: and again by the Prophet, *Hosea* 13. 4. *Thou shalt know no God but Me.* The same *Plain Truth* is as expresly delivered in the New Testament; *Mark* 12. 32. *There is One God, and there is none other but He.* 1 Cor. 8. 4. *There is none other God but One.* Gal. 3. 20. *God is One.* This therefore is the Scripture-Proposition, that *there is no other God but One*; or that *God is One.* But to this some Novellists have opposed a contrary Proposition, that *there is more than One, who is God*; or that *God is Three.* There is, say they, a Father, his Son, and a Holy Spirit, distinct from both, each of which *is* God, and *a* God.

Now since the first of these Propositions has been judged by God himself to be so important, and so necessary to be believ'd and profest; that He has made it the very first of his Commandments to Men, and since the other is inconsistent with it, and contradictory to it: We must have as clear a Commandment and Revelation from God, to believe and profess the second (which is to suppose, that God can make contrary Revelations, concerning an unchangeable Truth) as 'tis evident we once had for the first. And we the rather demand this, because those whom the Novellists have superadded to the One true God, are in holy Scriptures as plainly denied to be Gods, or God, as the Father is affirmed to be that one true God: *Mark* 10. 18. *Why callest thou me Good* (saith our Lord Christ) *there is none Good save One, that is God.* Ephes. 4. 4, 5, 6. *There is one Spirit,——one Hope, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all.* In the first of these Texts, the Lord Christ denieth himself to be God; in the other, *the one Spirit* and the *one Lord*, being without doubt the Holy Ghost or Spirit, and the Lord Christ; and they being here distinguished from, and opposed to the *One God*, 'tis evident they are as much denied to be the One God, as the one Hope, one Faith, or one Baptism are denied to be that one God.

The truth is, the holy Scriptures are so copious and plain in this matter, that the more learned Trinitarians confess, that the Doctrine of the Trinity is not founded on the Scriptures, but on the Tradition of the Church; so say *all the Catholick Doctors.* Some of them have not scrupled to own, that *this Doctrine is contrary to Reason*; and that such as have *pretended to prove it by Scripture, suo artificio vincuntur, are beaten at their own Weapon, by their Adversaries the Unitarians*; so saith D. *Petavius*, the most learned Writer of the most learned Order.

Dr. *Sherlock*, tho a Protestant, is not willing that this Question about the Unity of God, should be decided by the Scriptures only, but extols the Doctrine of the Trinity, as *the Traditionary Faith of the Church*, p. 31. He scornfully calls the Scripture (*p.* 29.) *the Note-maker's infallible and compleat Rule of Faith*, which also he repeats more than once; intimating thereby (for, what else can he mean?) that 'tis not Dr. *Sherlock*'s Rule of Faith, at least not a compleat and infallible Rule, in his Opinion. At *p.* 151. he first puts this case; Suppose that the natural Construction of the words of Scripture import such a sense, as is contrary to some evident Principle of Reason? Then he resolves his

irreverent *Supposition* in these words, *Then I won't believe the Scripture.* Neither did this drop from him unawares; for he goes on there in these farther words, *How! not believe Scripture? No, no, I will believe no pretended Revelation, which contradicts the plain Dictates of Reason, in which all Mankind agree.* But all or very near all Mankind hath more than once agreed in *Idolatry* and *Polytheism*: it seems the *Vindicator*, had he lived in those times, would not have believed the Scripture, against *the agreed sense of Mankind*, but would have departed from the one true God, to Idols and more Gods. The *Socinians* are of a contrary mind. Hath the Holy Scripture, that is, hath God said it? They will believe, tho all Men and Angels contradict it: They will always prefer the infinite Wisdom of God, before the infallible Dictates of Humane, or Angelick Reason: *Rom.* 3. 4. *Let God be true, and every Man a Liar.* 1 Cor. 1. 25. *The Foolishness of God is wiser than Men.*

Well, but tho the Scriptures are not, by their own Confession, so favourable to them, as to their Adversaries the *Socinians*; yet I hope they are civil, and do not expressly deny the Scriptures: No, but what is next to it, they elude the plainest Texts by *Scholastick* and *Metaphysical* Subtilties; and then framing their Creeds out of these last, they absolutely refuse a Subscription to the Scriptures, and require Men to subscribe and swear to their Creeds, that are contrary to the first Commandment of Scripture, and to the Apostles Creed.

The most famous of their Creeds, is that of *Athanasius*. I will first say something of the Man, and then subjoin the Notes that have been made on his Creed by another hand.

Athanasius his first Preferment was *Deacon* to *Alexander* Bishop of *Alexandria*; which, as the Discipline of the Church then was, is as much as now to say *the Bishop's Man*. Accordingly he waited on his Master to the *Nicene* Council, which assembled to judg of the Questions between *Arius* and the said *Alexander*. In this Council, *Athanasius* sometimes interposing, was noted to talk both so impertinently and so erroneously, that the Council thought fit to check him, and censure his Heterodoxy.

When the Council was ended, *Alexander* returned to *Alexandria*, where he died in the Year 326. The See of *Alexandria*, the second in the World for Authority and Riches, being thus vacant, there was a long Contention by several Competitors, for the Succession; and the People were so wearied with expectation, that at length a part of the Rabble cried up *Athanasius*, and he and they getting into the Church of St. *Dionysius*, forced two Bishops there and *then* (being the Night-time) to ordain him Bishop of the Patriarchal See of *Alexandria*.

The Bishops of *Egypt*, who were convened on this occasion to *Alexandria*, and without whose approbation, no Election to the Patriarchal or Metropolitan See was valid, by the Canons and Customs immemorial of the Catholick Church; the Bishops (I say) of *Egypt*, not only disapproved this Election and Ordination, but immediately *Anathematiz'd Athanasius*. But *Athanasius*, and his *Homousians* were too crafty *for the honest and legal Party*. For they presently dispatched a Messenger and Letter to the Emperor *Constantius*, in which they notify to him the Election of *Athanasius* by the *Alexandrians*, and pray his Majesty's Ratification thereof. *Constantius* knowing nothing of *Athanasius*, and thinking the Letter to be written by consent and direction of such as had the Right of Election; approved by his Letters again the Election of *Athanasius* by the *Alexandrians*, and orders him to be owned Bishop and Patriarch of *Alexandria*. *Athanasius* immediately presents the Imperial Letters to the Vice-Roy or Governour of *Egypt*, and especially to his Opposers, who durst now make no further words of the matter. Thus, as was said of one of the Popes, *Intravit ut Vulpes*. But how did he govern? Why, he out-did the rest of that Pope's Character, *Regnavit at Leo*.

First; He procured the Governour to force the People to hear him, and to communicate with him. He put several of the Alexan-

Alexandrian Clergy into Prison, and even into Irons. He beat some of the Egyptian Bishops with his Fists; he came into the Churches of others, where he broke the Altar and Communion-Cup, burnt the common Bible and (finally) demolished the Church it self. He depoted some Bishops, and put into their room Persons who had been degraded for their flagitious Lives by his Predecessors. He conspired with one *Philumnus* against the Emperor, and consulted how to stop the yearly Fleet of Corn from *Egypt*, on which the Armies and *Constantinople* depended. He committed Fornication, and that with a Nun. These and abundance the like, and greater Enormities, provoked at length the Bishops of *Egypt* to write to *Eusebius*, Arch-bishop of *Nicomedia*, to apply the Remedy provided by the Canons, a Council of Bishops.

Hereupon a Council was called at *Cesarea*, and the forementioned Crimes were sworn against *Athanasius* by the Clergy of *Alexandria*, and Bishops of *Egypt*: the Names of some of the Bishops were these, *Eusebius, Eudæmon, Callinicus, Ischyras, Eusebius, Pistus, Isaac, Achillas, Hermon, Adamantius, Arbathion, Ammonius, Peter, Theodorus.* The Council summoned *Athanasius* to appear, and to answer concerning the manner of his Election, and to the objected Irregularities: but he, knowing his Guilt, thank'd them for their Love, and staid at home. Therefore the Council petitioned *Constantine* to command *Athanasius* to appear and answer: *Constantine* sends forthwith his Letters Mandatory to *Athanasius*, to present himself to the Council, which he appointed to be held at *Tyre* the next Year, being the Year after 335.

At *Tyre Athanasius* appeared, and brought with him some Bishops of the *Homo-ousian* Faction: He denied all that had been objected to him, and hired a Whore to accuse *Eusebius*, President of the Council, of Fornication with her: But *Eusebius* intrapped and convinced her in such manner, as Dr. *Sherlock* (out of the Lives of Dr. *Cave*) has ascribed to *Athanasius*, at p. 31. of his Vindication. So many Accusations were daily brought into the Council against *Athanasius*; that the Fathers thought fit to search into the very bottom of *Athanasius* his Matters; and therefore sent a Deputation of *six* Bishops into *Egypt*, to inform themselves by sight, and from the mouth of all Persons concerned about the Election and whole Carriage of *Athanasius*. These came back loaded with such and so many Accusations, charged by Oath on *Athanasius*; that the Council for the Honour of the Christian Name, and to purge the Church of such a Scandal, first synodically declared his Election and Ordination void; and then order'd, that he should no longer live at *Alexandria* to infect the place.

What should a lost Man do? His desperate Case admits of nothing but a desperate Remedy; and however that happen to succeed, he cannot be worse of it than he is: Therefore *Athanasius* takes Post for *Constantinople*, applies himself to some great Courtiers of the *Homo-ousian* Faction, and by them represents to the Emperor, that the Council of *Tyre* was wholly *Arian*; that they had believed all things against him, meerly out of hatred to him for his Zeal to the Nicene Faith; that therefore it was reasonable his Cause should be heard by some other Judg or Judges.

Constantine willing to do Justice, and desirous also to find *Athanasius* innocent, because himself was an *Homo-ousian*, calls the Cause to his own hearing, summons the Witnesses on both sides, and begins the whole Cause anew, being assisted by a Council of Bishops whom he called to *Constantinople*. But both He and the Council having heard the Accusers, and the Defence made by *Athanasius* and his Friends, he not only approved the Sentence of the Council of *Tyre*, but banish'd *Athanasius* to *Treves* in *Germany*. It was thought it should seem, he could do least hurt in this City; he being a Greek, and the City Latin and German, distant from *Alexandria* more than two thousand Miles, and the utmost Border of the Roman Empire on the barbarous Nations.

From

From this time forward, *Constantius* became an Unitarian; for having discovered so much Wickedness in the chief Asserter of the Nicene Faith; he began more strictly to examine the Reasons of that Faith, and finding them invalid, and that all Antiquity was on the other side, before he died he made Profession of the Unitarian Doctrine, and was baptized by *Eusebius* of *Nicomedia*, Principal of the Unitarians. The Death and Baptism of Great *Constantine* happen'd in the Year 337. As for *Eusebius*, he also was by Church-men called *the Great*, for his *Piety*, *Miracles*, and such a sweetness and *dexterity in Business*, that he lived and died *Chief Minister* for Ecclesiastical Affairs, to the Emperors *Constantine* and *Constantius*. In the Person of this *Eusebius* ceased the Power of Miracles in the Christian Church. There was at the same time another *Eusebius*, an Unitarian also, Arch-Bishop of *Cesaria*, he is called *the Learned Eusebius*, and is Author of the celebrated *Ecclesiastical History*, and other Works. *Cujus tradito nomini & olim & hodie assurgit totus pene Orbis literarius*, saith the late Author of the *Historia Literaria Scriptorum Eccles.* p. 129. But to return from these admirable Men, to the no less admirable *Athanasius*.

Constantine the Great was succeeded by his three Sons, *Constantine*, *Constans*, and *Constantius*: *Constantine* had for his share *France*, *Spain* and *Great Britaine*; *Constans* had *Italy*, *Sicily* and *Africa*: *Constantius* had *Asia*, *Egypt*, *Greece*, and part of *Illyricum*. Of these *Constantine* and *Constans*, in the West, were *Homo-ousians*; *Constantius* in the East was an Unitarian. I said the two first were *Homo-ousians*, I use that term, because there was yet no such thing as a *Trinitarian*, the Divinity of the Holy Ghost not being yet believed by any. Upon the Death of great *Constantine*, all banish'd Men (by the accustomed Clemency of new Princes) were permitted to return to their Homes; therefore *Athanasius* also returned to *Alexandria*. But he behaved himself so much worse than ever, that the *Alexandrians* wrote to *Constantine*, humbly and most earnestly petitioning, that *Athanasius* might be either put to death, or banish'd. Upon this *Constantius* called a Council at *Antioch*, in the Year 341, at which were present 99 Bishops; these again deprived *Athanasius*, and substituted in his room *Gregorius*.

Athanasius fled to *Rome* to Pope *Julius*, who being a great Asserter of the Nicene Faith, wrote to the Bishops of the East, that *Athanasius* might return to his Episcopal Charge at *Alexandria*. The Eastern Bishops therefore convened to *Antioch*, and return Answer, That they are very sorry *Julius* should take part with Murderers, Demolishers of Churches, Corrupters of holy Virgins, Robbers of the Church-plate, Inventers of *unscriptural Words and Forms* in matters of Faith, Traitors to the Emperor, and to their Native Country; they said *the whole East* was witness of these things, and therefore desire *Julius* not to transgress the Canons of the Church, by receiving or favouring such Persons.

In the mean time the *Homo-ousian* Brothers, *Constantine* and *Constans* fall out; *Constantine* was vanquish'd and killed, and *Constans* immediately seized his part of the Empire, and added it to his own: so now *Constans* was Emperor of the whole West, and *Constantius* of the East. *Athanasius* applied himself to *Constans*, tells him, that he had suffered so much and so long for the Nicene Faith, that all the rest was Calumny invented by Adversaries, and believed in the Councils because the Fathers were *Arians*; and therefore prays that he may be restored to his See and Authority. *Constans* upon this writes to his Brother *Constantius*, that a Council might be held at *Sardica* in *Illyricum*, that should consist of the Bishops both of the East and West. Accordingly a Council is called there, *Anno* 347. The Western Bishops arrived first, and knowing the mind of *Constans*, took *Athanasius*, and all other deposed and excommunicated Bishops into Council with them, and even communicated also with them, contrary to the Canons of the Universal Church. Therefore when the Eastern

Bishops

Biſhops arrived, before they would enter into the Seſſions place, they deſire of the Weſterns, that *Athanaſius* and other condemned Perſons might withdraw, and not ſit in Council as Judges, or as having right of Suffrage, till they ſhould be legally and juridically reſtored. But the Weſtern Biſhops having committed a fault, reſolved to ſtand in it; and accordingly anſwer, That they knew no fault by *Athanaſius* and the reſt, and therefore would not remove them from their Seſſion. The Eaſterns replied, that then the Eaſtern Biſhops would hold a Council by themſelves, and admoniſh the Weſterns:

1. That it was contrary to Canon and Cuſtom, that an Eaſtern Biſhop (as *Athanaſius* confeſſedly was) ſhould be judged by any but the Eaſterns.

2. That it was ſtrange they ſhould know no fault by *Athanaſius*, whom all the World knew to ſtand deprived by the Councils of *Tyre*, *Conſtantinople* and *Antioch*, and by Great *Conſtantius*.

3. That *Athanaſius* would not have dared to appeal from theſe Sentences, but that his Perſon and the proofs of his Crimes were unknown to the Weſtern Biſhops, and many of his principal Accuſers either ſo far diſtant in place, that they could not be called, or after ſo long time (twelve Years) wholly withdrawn by Death. Notwithſtanding,

4. They offer'd, that a Deputation of Weſtern and Eaſtern Biſhops ſhould be ſent into *Egypt*, to examine all matters afreſh. And whereas *ſix* Biſhops had been formerly deputed by the Tyrian Council, and had brought back the Teſtimonies and Evidences of the Crimes charged on *Athanaſius*, *five* of theſe Biſhops (the *ſixth* being dead) offer'd to be condemned and deprived, without appealing either to the Emperor or to a Council, if the new deputed Biſhops (that ſhould be appointed by the Weſtern as well as the Eaſtern Biſhops, and ſhould conſiſt of both) did not confirm the whole Charge formerly brought out of *Egypt*, and on which *Athanaſius* was condemned by Great *Conſtantius*, and by the Tyrian and Conſtantinopolian Councils.

But the Weſtern Biſhops knew the mind of their Emperor *Conſtans*, and therefore refuſed this, and all other Offers; nay, they proceeded ſo far, as to procure a menacing Letter from *Conſtans* to the Eaſtern Biſhops, to terrify them into compliance with him, and with the Weſterns. But the Letter had no effect upon them.

For the Eaſtern Biſhops aſſembled in Council in a place by themſelves, and proteſted againſt the Weſtern Conventicle, as made up (for the moſt part) of Perſons uncapable of Seſſion or Vote in Council: afterwards they declared *Julius* of *Rome*, *Paulus* of *Conſtantinople*, *Athanaſius* of *Alexandria*, *Hoſius* of *Cordoba*, excommunicate and depoſed, and wrote an Encyclical Letter of all their Decrees, to all Biſhops and Churches. The Proceedings of the Eaſtern Biſhops, and their Offers and Reaſons had been ſo fair and clear, that all Men were ſatisfied with them; and therefore all the Churches every-where owned the Eaſtern Biſhops to be the true and only Council of *Sardica*. Even St. *Auſtin* does more than once profeſs, that he knew no other Council of *Sardica*, but that of the *Arians*: For he was (it ſhould ſeem) aſhamed to call that Convention of Weſtern Biſhops (who had obſerved no Conciliary Method, and had trampled upon all the Canons) a Council.

For all this, the Weſtern Biſhops went on in their deſign, or rather the deſign of their Emperor *Conſtans*, which was, to pick a Quarrel with his Brother *Conſtantius*. They reſtored all the depoſed and excommunicated Biſhops, and chiefly *Athanaſius*; and made thoſe famous Decrees and Canons, on which all Learned Men know, that the Supremary of the Biſhops of *Rome* is ſolely founded, and which from that time forward the Biſhops of *Rome* have ever practiſed. So that at the ſame time, theſe Fathers reſtored *Athanaſius*, and ſet up Anti-Chriſt. I challenge Dr. *Sherlock* in his next, to deny (if he can) that the Popes Supremacy was firſt decreed and ordained, by this Sardican Conventicle

ticle of Western Bishops, that restored *Athanasius*, and consequently, that Popery and Athanasianism were introduced at the same time, and by the same Persons.

This Conventicle having done what their Master required of them, *Constans* not long after wrote this Complemental Brotherly Letter to *Constantius*.

" *Athanasius* has proved, that the Bi-
" shoprick of *Alexandria* belongeth of
" right to him: Therefore let him be by
" you restor'd, or I will restore him by
" Arms.

Constantius being at that time ingaged with the Persians, judged it not for the safety of his Empire, to have to do at the same time with them, and with his Brother; and therefore agreed, that *Athanasius* should return to *Alexandria*. The next Year (being the Year after Christ 350,) God raised up an Enemy to *Constans*; for *Magnentius* slew him, and possest himself of the Western Empire. But *Anno* 353, the Emperor *Constantius*, in revenge of his Brother, fought and overcame *Magnentius*, and made himself absolute Lord both of the East and West Empires. The same Year a Council was held at *Arles*, in which *Athanasius* was again condemned. And in the Year 355, the Council of *Milan*, consisting of 300 Bishops, did also condemn *Athanasius* and his few Adherents. So *Athanasius* fled from *Alexandria*, and St. *George* is appointed by the Council to succeed him.

This is that St. *George*, the Honorary Saint of *England*, whose Anniversary Day is here kept on *April* 23; some of our late Kings have chosen to be crowned on his Day. The Soveraign and Knights of the most noble Order of the Garter, are from him called Knights of St. *George*. Many honourable Families of this and other Nations, are surnamed from him. His Memory is yet so famous over all the East, that the very Turks do honour to him, as an Hero and a Saint, by the Name of *Gergis*. He died a Martyr under the Reign of *Julian* the Apostate.

George was born a Gentleman, and was in his younger Years a Souldier; and having been a very brave Officer, was in time of Peace advanced to be *Treasurer* of the Imperial Exchequer at *Constantinople*. He is commonly pictured on Horse-back, arm'd and fighting with a Dragon in defence of a Virgin Lady; because when he was a Tribune or *Colonel*, he had rescued a Maiden Lady from a Dragon, with his Spear and Sword. But some turn this part of St. *George*'s Story into a Moral, and say, this Victory was obtained by *George* in his old Age. The Dragon (say they) was *Athanasius*, and the Virgin was the Church of *Alexandria*, which he by his Eloquence, Learning and Piety defended from the venemous and mortal Breath and Corruptions of *Athanasius*.

But however that be, 'tis certain our *George* applied himself very hard to his Study, after he was made Treasurer of the Exchequer; and gained the Reputation of the most learned of all Men of his time, in the Trinitarian Questions. When therefore he came to *Alexandria*, *sent by the Council of Milan*; he was received with so much Honour and Respect, that the Emperor *Constantius* was extreamly pleased, and wrote a Letter to the Alexandrians, in which he calls their Bishop, *the most Venerable* George, *a Man* (saith he) *the most skilful of all Mortals in these Questions. In whom the noble Alexandrians may confide, as in a Sacred Anchor.* Then the Emperor thanks them for deserting (they are the very words of his Letter) *that Impostor and Conjurer Athanasius*, and for adhering to *holy George*. He assures them, he should think himself in a fault, if he did not exceed their Founder, Great *Alexander*, in Kindness to and Esteem of their Royal City, and their Persons. But to resume the History of *Athanasius* and his Doctrine.

In the Year 357, a General Council was called at *Syrmium*; here *Hosius* (who had been President of the Nicene Council, and of the Sardican Conventicle) and the other Fathers who had composed the Nicene Council, and that were Authors of the Nicene Creed,

Creed, did now make a contrary Creed; in which they forbid all mention of *Homo-ousios*, and declare that the Son had a Beginning, and was inferior to the Father in Godhead, Power, and all other respects.

In the Year 359, all the Bishops of the World assembled to the Council of *Arimi-num*. And whereas it had been hitherto said by some, that the Son is *Homo-ousios*, i. e. *of like and equal Nature and Substance with the Father*: by others that he is *Homoi-ousios*, i. e. tho not of equal, yet *of like Nature and Substance with the Father*, because he has a Spiritual, and in some sense a Divine Nature; the Council at *Arimi-num* did not think fit that the Son should be at all compared with God, nor yet meer and common Creatures, and therefore rejected both *Homo-ousios*, and *Homoi-ousios*, and required that it be only said, *The Son is not a Creature like unto other Creatures*. This was the very Doctrine of *Arius*, and seems to have been taken out of his Writings; for in his Letter to *Alexander*, he saith of the Son, *He is a perfect Creature of God, but not like any of the rest*. And again, *Made, but not like other things that are made*.

But the Reader will say, This is a Tale of *Athanasius*, so every way contrary to that of Dr. *Sherlock* in his Vindication; that of necessity one of them is not only false, but a wilful Forgery, at least in the first Authors; and 'tis not obvious, how an unlearned Man should judg with any certainty, which of them is true, and which false. I answer; A Judicious Person may fully satisfy himself without being at the trouble of a laborious Search. For,

1. The Offer of the Eastern Bishops at *Sardica*, while the Emperor *Constans* was yet alive, That a new Deputation of Bishops should be sent into *Egypt*, and if they found that the Depositions brought to the Tyrian and Constantinopolitan Councils were in any particular false, that then the five surviving Bishops would be deposed without appeal ng to *Cæsar*, or to a Council. This Offer, I say, was such, as did then satisfy all honest and considering Men, and in all Ages to come will satisfy all such. It also demonstrates the Falshood of what Dr. *Sherlock*, from his *Legendary* Authors, says, That at the Council of *Milan*, *Constantius* drew his Sword, and feared the Fathers into compliance. For what need that, when the Evidence against *Athanasius* was so undeniable, that *Constans* and the Conventicle of *Sardica* durst not suffer the Cause to be re-examined, or permit a Deputation of Bishops to be sent into *Egypt*, but acquitted *Athanasius* without any Trial, only because the Emperor *Constans* wanted a Quarrel with his Brother *Constantius*?

2. Who that considers at all, can give Credit to one or two partial Historians of the Nicene Faction, and who lived an Age after *Athanasius* and all these Councils, *against Constantius* the Great, a Prince the most just and honourable that (perhaps) ever managed the Roman Empire, and an *Homo-usian* (by Confession of all Parties) at what time he condemned *Athanasius*, and banish'd him to *Treves*; also *against* so many and great Councils of learned and holy Bishops, in some of which Councils the President and all the Nicene Fathers were present and consented: Lastly, against Historians that were contemporary to *Athanasius* and to these Councils? Dr. *Sherlock*'s Calumny, that the Fathers at *Arimi-num* were in a manner starved into Compliance, is so false; that all the ancient Historians, *of both Parties*, witness, that the Emperor not only bore the whole Charges of all the Bishops to and from the Council, but also allowed to each of them a very honourable Sallary, during all the time of their being there. But the Nicene Faith being given up at *Arimi-num*, by the Nicene Fathers themselves, it was necessary for the Men of that Perswasion in after-Ages, to devise something to ward off so great a Blow, as the Authority of the greatest Council that ever was; a Council consisting of all the Bishops of the whole World.

3. Whereas this is the Question between Dr. *Sherlock* and the Author of *the brief Notes*, Whether or no *Athanasius* was as vicious in his Life, and his Doctrine as erroneous, as is pretended in the brief Notes; and

whether the before-mentioned Councils did *freely* ſo judg? I ſay, this being the Queſtion, Dr. *Sherlock* becauſe he cannot deny the matter of Fact, that *Athanaſius* was often condemned by theſe Councils, and that his and the Nicene Doctrine was not only rejected, but a contrary Doctrine advanced, therefore he pretends that the Fathers in theſe Councils were for the moſt part good, honeſt, Catholick Biſhops, and only awed into Compliance by the Emperor *Conſtantius*. To this I ſay therefore, let the Doctor take his Option, either *Athanaſius* was thought as guilty, and his Doctrine freely judged as erroneous, as the Author of the brief Notes has ſaid; or all Dr. *Sherlock*'s good, honeſt Catholick Biſhops were a pack of the greateſt Villains in nature, in condemning a Perſon whom they believed to be moſt innocent, and a Doctrine which they held to be fundamental and neceſſary to Salvation. In a word, the Doctor muſt either give up his dear *Athanaſius*, or the Biſhops of the whole World, whom he pretends to have been Catholick.

But this ſhall ſuffice concerning *Athanaſius*, and the countenance which he and his Doctrine found in the Catholick Church of that Age, in anſwer to the fair Tale Dr. *Sherlock* has told in his Vindication, out of that *accurate and faithful* Hiſtorian Dr. *Cave*. Let us now conſider the Creed, that they have impoſed on us by the name of *St. Athanaſius* his Creed.

Brief Notes on the Creed of St. Athanaſius.

Creed. "WHoſoever will be ſaved, before all things, 'tis neceſſa-
"ry that he hold the Catholick Faith.

Notes. *A Good Life* is of abſolute neceſſity to Salvation; but *a Right Belief* in theſe Points that have been always controverted in the Churches of God, is in no degree Neceſſary, much leſs *Neceſſary before all things*. He that leads a profane or vicious Life, ſins againſt *a plain acknowledged Rule*, and the expreſs unqueſtioend Words and *Letter* of the Divine Law, and the Dictates of Natural Conſcience; He *wilfully refuſes* to advert to theſe Monitors, and therefore can no ways palliate or excuſe his Wickedneſs. But he that errs in a Queſtion of Faith, after having uſed *reaſonable Diligence* to be rightly inform'd, is in no fault at all; *his Error is pure Ignorance*. Not a culpable Ignorance; for how can it be culpable, not to know that, of which a Man is ignorant after *a diligent and impartial Inquiry?*

Creed. "Which Faith except a Man keep
"Whole and Undefiled, without doubt he
"ſhall periſh everlaſtingly.

Notes. By keeping this Faith *Whole and Undefiled*, muſt be meant (if any thing be meant) that a Man muſt believe and profeſs it, *without Adding to it, or Taking from it*. If we take ought from it, we do not keep it *Whole*; if we add any thing to it, we do not keep it *Undefiled*: and either way we ſhall periſh everlaſtingly.

Firſt, for *Adding*. What if an honeſt plain Man, *becauſe He is a Chriſtian and a Proteſtant*, ſhould adds this Article to the Creed? "I believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old
"and New Teſtaments, to be a Divine, an
"Infallible and *Compleat Rule*, both for Faith
"and Manners. I hope no Proteſtant would think a Man ſhall be damned for ſuch Addition: And if ſo, then this Creed of *Athanaſius* is at leaſt *an Unneceſſary Rule* of Faith.

Then for *taking ought from* this Creed; the whole Greek Church (diffuſed through ſo many Provinces) rejects, *as Heretical*, that Period of it, "*The Holy Ghoſt is of the Father,*
"*and of the Son:* contending that the Holy Spirit is *from the Father only*. Which alſo they demonſtratively prove, as we ſhall ſee in its proper

proper place. As for the Menace here of *Athanaſius*, that they ſhall periſh Everlaſtingly; they laugh at it, and ſay, *He was drunk when he made this Creed.* Gennad. Shol. A. Bp. of *Conſtantinople.*

Creed. "And the Catholick Faith is this.

Notes. Catholick Faith, is as much as to ſay in plain Engliſh, the Faith *of the whole* Church. Now in what Age was this which here follows, the Faith of *the whole* Church? Not in the Age of *Athanaſius* himſelf; who for this Faith, and for Seditious Practices, was baniſh'd from *Alexandria* in *Egypt* (where he was Biſhop) no leſs than *four* times; whereof the firſt was by *Conſtantius* the Great. He was alſo condemned in his own Life-time by *ſix* Councils, as an Heretic, and Seditious Perſon: Of theſe Councils, that at *Milan* conſiſted of 300 Biſhops; and that of *Ariminum* of 550, the greateſt Convention of Biſhops that ever was.

For the times Before and After, the curious Reader may ſee *Chr. Sandius* his Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory: in which the Learned Author gives a large account, by *what* and *whoſe* means the Athanaſian and Trinitarian Faith did at length prevail, againſt *the Ancient Belief* of but One God, or *but One who is God.* Therefore *quære*, With what Forehead the Anthor of this Creed, calls this, *the Catholick Faith?* when 'tis certain it has been ſo in no Age, and leaſt of all in the (pretended) Author's.

Creed. "The Catholick Faith is this, That "we worſhip One God in Trinity; and Tri-"nity in Unity.

Notes. He means here, that we muſt ſo worſhip the One true God, as to remember He is Three Perſons; and ſo worſhip the Three Perſons, as to bear in Mind that they are but one Subſtance, or Godhead, or God. So the Author explains himſelf in the next Articles, which are theſe;

"Neither confounding the Perſons, nor "dividing the Subſtance: for there is one "Perſon of the Father, another of the Son, "another of the Holy Ghoſt: But the God-"head of the Father, and of the Son, and "of the Holy Ghoſt, is all one. Therefore all theſe Articles make indeed but one Article, which is this; "The One true God is "*Three diſtinct Perſons*; and Three diſtinct "Perſons (Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt) "are the One true God.

Plainly, as if a Man ſhould ſay, *Peter, James*, and *John*, being *Three Perſons*, are *One Man*; and One Man is theſe Three diſtinct Perſons, *Peter, James*, and *John*. Is it not now a Ridiculous Attempt, as well as a Barbarous Indignity, to go about thus to make Aſſes of all Mankind, under pretence of teaching them a Creed, and things Divine, to deſpoil them of their Reaſon, the Image of God, and the Character of our Nature? But let us, in two words, examine the parts of this Monſtrous Propoſition, as 'tis laid down in the Creed it ſelf.

"Neither confounding the Perſons, nor "dividing the Subſtance.

But how can we not confound the Perſons, that have (they ſay) but *One numerical Subſtance?* And how can we but divide the Subſtance, which we find in Three *diſtinct divided* Perſons?

"There is one Subſtance of the Father, "another of the Son, another of the Holy "Ghoſt.

Then the Son is not the Father, nor is the Father the Son, nor the Holy Ghoſt either of them. I ſhall not need to prove this Conſequence, not only becauſe 'tis evident, but becauſe 'tis acknowledged by the Trinitarians. But if the Father is not the Son, and yet is (by confeſſion of All) *the One true God*; then the Son is not the One true God, becauſe He is not the Father; the reaſon is ſelf-evident; for how can the Son be the One true God, *if he is not He who is the One true God?* After the ſame manner it may be proved, that (on the Athanaſian Principles) neither the Father nor Holy Spirit are, or can be God, or the One true God; for neither of them is the Son, who is the One true God according to *Athanaſius*, and all Trinitarians: For they all ſay, the Father is the One true God, the Son is the One true God, the Holy Ghoſt is

the One true God: Which is a threefold Contradiction, becauſe there is but One true God, and one of theſe Perſons is not the other. But if it be a Contradiction, 'tis certainly falſe; for every Contradiction being made up of Inconſiſtencies, deſtroys it ſelf, and *is its own Confutation.*

Creed. "The Godhead of the Father, "and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt, is "all One; the Glory equal, the Majeſty co-"eternal.

Notes. The meaning of the laſt Clauſe is, That the Glory and Majeſty of the Son and Holy Spirit, is equal to the Glory and Majeſty of the Father; or the Son and Holy Spirit are equally Glorious and Majeſtical with God the Father.

Therefore I ask, Whether the Glory and Majeſty, with which the Son and Spirit are Glorious and Majeſtical, be *the ſame in Number* (that is, the very ſame) with which the Father is Glorious and Majeſtical; or only *the ſame for Kind and Degree?* If it be not the ſame *in Number*, then the Godhead of the Father, and of the Son, is not (as this Creed teaches) *all One*; and they are not one and the ſame God: for two *Infinite and Diſtinct Glories* and *Majeſties*, make two Gods, and three make three Gods; as every one ſees, and (to ſay true) the Trinitarians themſelves confeſs. It remains therefore that, they ſay, the Glory and Majeſty of the Son and Spirit, is the ſame *in Number*, or Numerically the ſame, and not for Kind and Degree only, with that of the Father: but then it follows, that the Glory and Majeſty of theſe Perſons is *neither Equal nor Coeternal.* Not Equal, for 'tis the ſame, which Equals never are: nor Coeternal, for this alſo plainly intimates that they are Diſtinct; for how Coeternal, if not Diſtinct? Do we ſay, a thing is Coeternal or Contemporary with it ſelf? Therefore this Article doth alſo impugn and deſtroy it ſelf. Beſides, if the Glory and Majeſty of the Three Perſons be *numerically the ſame*, then ſo are all their other Attributes; from whence it follows, that there is no real Difference between the Three Perſons; and that they are only *three ſeveral Names of God*; which is the Hereſy of the Sabellians.

In the next place this Creed teaches, that "The Father is Incomprehenſible, Uncreate, "Eternal, Almighty; the Son is Incompre-"henſible, Uncreate, Eternal, Almighty; "the Holy Ghoſt is Incomprehenſible, Un-"create, Eternal, Almighty: Alſo that each "of theſe Perſons *by himſelf* is God and "Lord; ſo that the Father is God, the Son "is God, and the Holy Ghoſt is God: yet "there are not Three Gods or Lords, nor "Three Incomprehenſibles, nor Three Al-"mighties, nor Three Eternals or Uncre-"ated.

Now if in imitation of this, a Man ſhould have a mind to ſay; "The Father is a Per-"ſon, the Son is a Perſon, and the Holy "Ghoſt is a Perſon, yet there are *not Three* "*Perſons*, but one Perſon. I would know, why this were not as good *Grammar* and *Arithmetick*; as when *Athanaſius* ſays, the Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Ghoſt is God; yet *not Three Gods*, but one God: or when he ſays, the Father Uncreated, the Son Uncreated, the Holy Ghoſt Uncreated, yet *not Three Uncreated*, but one Uncreated. And ſo of the reſt.

Doth not a Man contradict himſelf, when the Term or Terms in his Negation, are the ſame with thoſe in his Affirmation? If not, then it may be true, that "the Father is "a Perſon, the Son is a Perſon, the Holy "Ghoſt is a Perſon; yet *there are not Three* "*Perſons*, but one Perſon: For all the fault here is only this, that in the laſt Clauſe the Term *Perſon* is *denied* to belong to more than One, when in the firſt it had been *affirmed* of no fewer than Three. For the ſame reaſon, it muſt be a Contradiction to ſay, "The Father is God, the Son is God, "the Holy Ghoſt is God, yet *there are not* "*three Gods*, but one God: for the Term *God* is at laſt *denied* to belong to more than One, tho in the firſt it was affirmed of Three. Will they ſay, that in theſe words, *they are not Three Gods, but One God?* the Term *God* is

is not denied to belong to more than One, or is not appropriated to One. If ſo, then *there are not Three Perſons, but One Perſon*; and again, *there are not Three Men, but One Man*: Then (I ſay) theſe Propoſitions do not deny the Terms *Perſon* and *Man* to belong to more than One, or appropriate them to One only; which yet every Body confeſſes they do.

But here is an Arithmetical, as well as Grammatical Contradiction. For in ſaying, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghoſt; yet not Three Gods, but One God: A Man firſt diſtinctly numbers Three Gods; and then in ſumming them up, *bruiſhly* ſays, not Three Gods, but One God.

To theſe things, it will perhaps be anſwered, That when we ſay, *God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghoſt*; or thus, *the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghoſt is God*: the Term *God* is uſed *Perſonally*: but when 'tis ſaid, *There are not Three Gods, but One God*: the Term *God* is uſed *Eſſentially*, and therefore comprehends the whole Three Perſons: ſo that there is neither *a Grammatical, nor Arithmetical Contradiction*. But this Remedy is worſe (if poſſible) than the Diſeaſe: for it owns that there are *Three Perſonal Gods*, though there is but *one Eſſential God*; and that otherways the Propoſitions of which we are ſpeaking, would imply all the aforeſaid Contradictions. This Remedy, I ſay, is worſe than the Diſeaſe. For, 1. Three Perſonal Gods, and one Eſſential God, make Four Gods; if the Eſſential God be not the ſame with the Perſonal Gods: and tho he is the ſame, yet ſince they are not the ſame with one another, but diſtinct, it follows, that there are Three Gods, that is, Three Perſonal Gods. 2. It introduces *two ſorts of True Gods*; Three Perſonal, and One Eſſential. But the Chriſtian Religion knows and owns but One True and moſt High God, of any ſort. And I would know of the Trinitarians, whether they dare ſay in expreſs words, *There are two ſorts of True Gods?*

Creed. "For like as we are *compelled* by "the Chriſtian Verity, to acknowledg every "Perſon *by himſelf* to be God and Lord, *&c.*

Notes. By the Chriſtian Verity, I ſuppoſe are meant, the Sacred Books which contain the Chriſtian Religion, that is, the Books of the Old and New Teſtaments. But do theſe Books, and do's that Verity *compel us* to the acknowledgment of Three Perſons, each of which is *by himſelf* Supream God and Lord, and yet all of them but One God? Doth, I ſay, the Holy Scripture *compel us* to this Contradictory Acknowledgment? Is there any Text alledged from Scripture, which all the Unitarians, and ſome or other of the moſt learned Trinitarians, do not eaſily interpret in ſuch ſenſe, that the Unity of God is preſerved; and no more than one Perſon (even the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt) acknowledged to be God? See the Hiſtory of the *Unitarians*. But if there is no Text of Scripture, but what is in the Opinion of ſome or other of their own Learned Men, fairly capable of a ſenſe contrary to the Faith delivered in this Creed: then we are *not compelled* to acknowledg this Faith. And the truth is, the Conteſt between the Unitarians and Trinitarians is not, as is commonly thought, *a Claſh of Reaſon with Scripture*: but it layeth here, Whether, when the Holy Scriptures may be underſtood as teaching only One God, or but One who is God, which agrees with the reſt of Scripture, and with Natural Reaſon; we muſt notwithſtanding, preſer an Interpretation of it which is abſurd, and contrary to it ſelf, to Reaſon, and to the reſt of Scripture, ſuch as the Trinitarian Interpretation (expreſt in this Creed) appears to be? In a word, the Queſtion only is, Whether we ought to interpret Holy Scripture when it ſpeaks of God, *according to Reaſon*, or not; that is, like Fools, or like Wiſe Men?

Creed. "The Son is of the Father alone; "not Made, nor Created, but Begotten.

Notes. Here, and in the next Period, *Athanaſius* is got into his *Altitudes*, or *Profanities*, which you will. Here 'tis that the

the Ignorant think, they are taught *the Inmoſt Secrets* of Theological Knowledg: but *High* and *Low* are no more contrary, than the things which are here affirmed as Equal Truths.

If the Creed-maker had ſpoke here of the Generation of the Son by the Divine Power on the Virgin *Mary*, it would have been true, that, *the Son is neither Made, nor Created, but Begotten:* but then the firſt part of the Article would be falſe, that *the Son is of the Father alone*; for He that has a Father, and a Mother, is *of Both*. But ſince He ſpeaks of the (pretended) *Eternal Generation*, the latter part of the Article is falſe, and inconſiſtent with the firſt part of it. Every Novice in Grammar, and proper ſpeaking, knows, that *Begotten*, when 'tis diſtinguiſhed from *Made* and *Created*, always ſuppoſes two Parents, a Mother as well as a Father: 'tis therefore a Contradiction to ſay, *the Son is of the Father alone, not Made, nor Created, but Begotten*; for if he is Begotten, he cannot be of the Father alone; and if He is of the Father alone, He is not Begotten, but *either Made, or Created*.

Creed. "The Holy Ghoſt is of the Fa-"ther and of the Son; neither Made, nor "Created, nor Begotten, but Proceeding.

Notts. The firſt fault here is, that the Holy Ghoſt is ſaid to proceed from the Father, *and from the Son*. To which Hereſy the Greek Church have ever oppoſed thoſe clear words, John 15. 26. *When the Comforter is come, whom I will ſend unto you* from the Father, *even the Spirit of Truth* which proceedeth from the Father, *He ſhall teſtify of me.*

Secondly, He ſaith here, that the Holy Ghoſt is *not Begotten, but Proceeding:* He adds ſhortly after, that *He who will be ſaved, muſt thus think of the Trinity:* Therefore ſurely *Begotten and Proceeding* differ very much, and very clearly; elſe 'tis an harſh Sentence, that we ſhall be damned if we do not conceive, beſides all other unconceivable Myſteries of this Creed, that the Holy Ghoſt is *not Begotten, but Proceeds*. Yet after all, 'tis confeſſed by the moſt Learned Trinitarians, that Begotten, and Proceeding, differ nothing at all; for they acknowledg that it is rightly ſaid, *The Son proceeds from the Father*, and that *the Holy Ghoſt is generated of Both*; directly contrary to this Creed. It follows, that *Athanaſius* has damned the whole World, for not diſtinguiſhing where no Diſtinction can be made, at leaſt with any certainty. And perhaps this Damning Humour of his, has *juſtly* provoked ſome to write him, not S. *Athanaſius*, but (drawing the *S* a little nearer) *Bathanaſius*.

Creed. "So there is One Father, not "Three Fathers; One Son, not Three "Sons; One Holy Ghoſt, not Three Holy "Ghoſts.

Notts. In conſiſtence with what goes before, He ſhould have ſaid, Two Fathers; Two Sons; and Three Holy Ghoſts, or Spirits. For the Second Perſon is the Son of the Firſt, and the Third *proceeds* (which is nothing elſe but *is generated*) from the Firſt and Second, which makes Two Fathers, and Two Sons; and all Three of them are Holy Spirits; for the Father is an Holy Spirit, and ſo is the Son, no leſs than the Third Perſon. But this is not the firſt time in this Creed, that *Athanaſius* has diſcover'd *He could not count*.

Creed. "In this Trinity, none is Afore, or "After other; none is Greater, or Loſs than "another.

Notts. Yet the Son himſelf ſaith, *John* 14. 28. *My Father is greater than I.* And for the other Clauſe, *None is Afore or After other*; 'tis juſt as true as that there is no difference at all between Afore and After. I ask, Whether the Son doth not, *as He is a Son*, derive both Life and Godhead from the Father? All Trinitarians grant, He do's; grounding themſelves on the Nicene Creed, which expreſly calls the Son, *God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; Begotten, not Made*. But if the Father gave to the Son Life and Godhead; He muſt have both before he could communicate or give either of them to the Son, and conſequently was Afore the Son was. No Effect is ſo early

early as its Cauſe; for if it were, it ſhould not have needed, nor had that for its Cauſe. No Propoſition in *Euclid* is more certain or evident than this.

Creed. "The right Faith is, That we "believe and confeſs, that our Lord Jeſus "Chriſt, the Son of God, is both God and "Man.

Notes. Then the Lord Chriſt is *Two Perſons.* For as He is God, He is the ſecond Perſon of the (pretended) Trinity: and as He is Man (*a perfect Man*, as this Creed afterwards ſpeaks) He is alſo a Perſon: for a Rational Soul, vitally united to an Human Body, is a Perſon, if there be any ſuch thing as Perſon upon Earth; nay, 'tis the only thing upon Earth that is a Perſon. Let the *Athanaſians* therefore either ſay, that the Lord Chriſt *is two Perſons*; which is the Hereſy of *Neſtorius*, condemned in a General Council: Or, that He is *not a Man*, contrary to 1 *Tim.* 2. 5. *There is One God, and One Mediator between God and Man, the Man Jeſus Chriſt*: Or, that He is *not God*, which is the Truth.

Creed. "Who, altho He be God and "Man; yet He is not two, but one Chriſt. "One, not by Converſion of the Godhead "into Fleſh, but by taking of the Manhood "into God: One, not by Confuſion of Sub-"ſtance, but by Unity of Perſon.

Notes. But becauſe theſe words, *One, not by converſion of the Godhead into Fleſh, but by taking of the Manhood into God*; and again, *One, not by Confuſion of Subſtance, but Unity of Perſon*; cannot readily be underſtood by themſelves: the Creed-maker explains them in this following Article; *For as the Reaſonable Soul and Fleſh is one Man; ſo God and Man is one Chriſt*: That is, as a Soul united vitally to a Body, maketh one Perſon, called Man, without confounding the two Subſtances of Soul and Body; for the Soul remaineth what it was, and ſo alſo does the Body: So God the Son being united to a Reaſonable Soul and Body, doth, *together with them*, make one Perſon, called Chriſt, without confounding the Subſtances of the Divinity or Humanity; for the Divinity remains, without the leaſt Change, what it was, and and ſo doth the Humanity, or Reaſonable Soul and Body. This is the only Offer at Senſe, that is to be found in this whole Creed; but ſo far from explicating, that it farther perplexes the difficulty of the (pretended) Incarnation; as will appear by theſe two Conſiderations.

1. In the *Perſonal Union* of a Soul with a Body, the Union is between two Finite Things: but in *the* (pretended) *Perſonal Union* of God to Man, and Man to God, the Union is between Finite and Infinite; which (on the Principles of the Trinitarians) is impoſſible. For we muſt either ſuppoſe, that Finite and Infinite are Commenſurate, that is, Equal; which every one knows is falſe: or that the Finite is united but to ſome part of the Infinite, and *is diſjoyned from the reſt*; which all Trinitarians deny and abhor.

You will ſay, If they admit neither of theſe, how do they ſhew the Poſſibility of the Incarnation, or Union of God to Man? They tell you, God indeed is Infinite, and every Reaſonable Soul and Body (even that of Chriſt) is Finite; yet the whole God and whole Man are united; becauſe, *As the whole Eternity of God doth coexiſt to a moment of Time; ſo the whole Immenſity of God is in every Mathematical Point of Space.* The very Truth is, they cannot otherways defend the Incarnation, or *Perſonal Union* of an Infinite God to a Finite Man: but withal it muſt be owned, that then the Doctrines of the Trininey and Incarnation do infer, imply, and ſuppoſe all the Contradictions, that Mr. *Johnſon* has objected to the Doctrine of Tranſubſtantiation, in that little Golden Tract, ſo deſervedly eſteemed by All. His whole Book and all his Demonſtrations are founded on theſe two Suppoſitions, that *a longer time doth not all of it coexiſt to a ſhorter; nor is a greater Extenſion conſtipated or contained in a leſs*, much leſs in a Mathematical Point. Therefore all his Book, and all that he hath ſo well ſaid and argued in the Preface con-

cerning

cerning the Authority and Judicature of Reason in Matters of Religion, equally and effectually destroys the Doctrines of the Trinity and Transubstantiation. If the Reader would have an excellent Book, let him procure that. But Oh! were the Press as free for the Unitarians as 'tis for other Protestants; how easily would they make it appear, that the Follies and Contradictions so justly charged on Transubstantiation, are neither for Number, Consequence, nor Clearness, any way comparable to those implied in the *Athanasian* Creed; and that the Trinity hath the same, and no other Foundation with Transubstantiation; so that we must of necessary admit both or neither. If *the Church* is to interpret Scripture for us, we must admit both; but if *Reason*, we can admit neither, and this (I think) the Trinitarians will not deny.

But secondly, In the (pretended) Incarnation or Union of God with Man, the Union cannot be *Personal*, as 'tis between the Soul and Body; it cannot, I mean, be such an Union as to make but one Person. The Union of the Soul and Body may be properly Personal, that is, may constitute or make one Person; because 'tis not the Union of two Persons, but only of one Person (the Soul) to a thing otherways without Life, Reason, Memory, or Free-will. The Body is but as it were the Garment of the Soul, and is wholly acted by it, and depending on it. But in the (pretended) Union of God with Man, there are two distinct and very different Lives, Reasons, Memories and Free-wills: which utterly destroys a Personal Union; for that supposes but one Life, one Reason, one Memory, one Free-will: for if these things which constitute a Person, are found more than once, there is no longer one Person, but two, and consequently no Personal Union in the sense of which we are speaking.

Creed. "This is the Catholick Faith; "which except a Man believe faithfully, he "cannot be saved.

Notes. By *Believing*, *Athanasius* doth not mean *bare* Believing, but he includeth also therein *Profession:* for he saith a little before, *The right Faith is, that we Believe and Confess*, &c. So that a Man cannot be saved, unless he Believes and *Professes* as this Creed directs him.

First, For *Believing*. *What if a Man cannot believe it?* Are we obliged under the Penalty of the loss of Salvation, to believe it, whether we can or no? Doth God require of any Man *an Impossible Condition*, in order to Salvation?

Secondly, As for *Professing* under pain of Damnation. *What if it be against a Man's Conscience to profess it?* The Scripture saith, *Whatsoever is not of Faith, is Sin:* if therefore a Man professes against his Conscience, he sins; and if notwithstanding this, a Man must either profess, or be damned, then God requires *some Men* to sin in order to their Salvation: but this we are sure is false, and therefore that the Menace in the Article is vain.

And now I appeal to all Men, that have any freedom of Judgment remaining; Whether this Creed is fit to be retained in any Christian, much less Protestant and Reformed Church? Since it subverts the Foundations, not only of Christianity, but of all Religion; that is to say, of Reason and Revelation: there being no Principle in Reason and Scripture more evident, than that *God is One*; or that there is one Almighty, only-Wise and Good Person, or Father of all. If we cannot be sure of this, then Religion and Christianity are built upon Fancy only, and have no solid Foundation.

This Creed may be professed by the Roman Political Church; because it gives countenance to their Absurd Transubstantiation, and Cunning Traditions added to Scripture; as those Doctrines do to the gaining of Veneration, and consequently Dominion and Riches to their Clergy: But in a Reformed Church, where the Scripture is held to be *a compleat Rule* of Faith and Manners; and also to be Clear and Plain in

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all things neceſſary to Salvation, even to the meaneſt Underſtanding, that reads it or hears it with Sobriety and Attention; ſuch a Confeſſion of Faith is (I think) intolerable, as being utterly inconſiſtent with thoſe Principles, and reducing us back to the Roman Bondage.

Beſides, Nothing has been or is more ſcandalous to Jews and Mahometans, than this Creed, the chief Article of whoſe Religion it is, that *there is one only God*. The Evidence of which Principle is ſuch in Nature, as well as Scripture, that it has propagated Mahometiſm among greater Numbers, than at this Day own Chriſtianity: For the ſake of that one Truth, ſo many Nations have ſwallowed all the Errors and Follies of the *Alcoran*, or Book of *Mahomet*; as on the other Hand, Chriſtianity has been rejected and deteſted among them, on the account of the Vulgar Chriſtians *Three Perſons, who are ſeverally and each of them God*.

But the Miſchiefs of this Creed do not ſtay here, it is levelled not only againſt the true Faith, but is alſo deſtructive of that Love and Charity, which is the Spirit and Life of Chriſtianity; and without which, Faith is but a *Lifeleſs Body*. For as if it would effectually inſpire all its Believers with a Spirit of Judging, Damning, and Uncharitableneſs; it pronounces the Sentence of Eternal Damnation, in the Beginning, Middle and Concluſion, upon all that do not both Believe and Profeſs this Faith, and keep it *Whole* and *Undefiled*; that is, upon the whole *Greek Church*, and other Churches in *the Eaſt*; and upon at leaſt five parts of ſix of all that profeſs Chriſtianity in the World, whoſe Underſtandings cannot poſſibly reach to the Senſe and Coherence, which ſome pretend to find in this Creed.

Thus the Chriſtian Religion is deſtroyed, in both the Eſſential Parts of it, *Faith* and *Love*. Hence have proceeded many and endleſs Controverſies and Wars among Chriſtians: and at length the more Fierce and Violent, the more Deceitful and Sophiſtical Part, have attained a Tyrannical Domination over their Oppoſers; and have introduced and ſettled, a Chriſtianity ſhall I call it, or, *a Superſtition*, or *a Polity*, quite contrary to the Doctrine and Practice of our Bleſſed Lord, and his Apoſtles?

THE Notes upon the Creed of *Athanaſius* have been already printed by themſelves, and were received and approved by ſeveral Learned Men, both of *London* and in the Country. Dr. *Sherlock* has thought fit to oppoſe to them a large Book, in which at *Pag.* 142. he ſaith, *My Undertaking is to vindicate the Athanaſian Creed, and the Doctrine of a Trinity in Unity.*

Yet in this *Vindication*, he hath given up to his Adverſary, all the ancient Defences of this Creed and of the Trinity; on which his Predeceſſors in this Controverſy were wont to inſiſt; and has advanced in their room, an Hypotheſis or Explication, never ſo much as named or heard of before. He pretends to ſalve by theſe two words, *Self-conſciouſneſs* and *Mutual-conſciouſneſs*, all the Difficulties of this Great Myſtery; ſo ſufficiently and evidently, that the Notion of a Trinity in Unity, *is now* (He ſaith) *as clear and eaſy, as that of but One God*. But this is too much for any Man to take on his bare word, or without carefully examining what He has ſaid.

1. Concerning the Divine Subſtance, Nature, or Eſſence: for in this Queſtion theſe are Equivalent Terms, both with the Vindicator, and with the Author of the Notes.

2. How doth he deſcribe the *Three* Perſons; and how is each Perſon *one with it ſelf*; and how are they *diſtinguiſhed* each from other.

3. How are they *united with one another*; and how do they All make one God.

First; *Concerning the Divine Substance, or Essence, or Nature.*

In his Discourses concerning the Divine Substance, or Essence; the Vindicator seems sometimes to be a perfect *Hobbist*, to deny all Spiritual and Immaterial Substance; or that there is any other Substance but *Matter*, or Body.

He saith (for example) at *Pag.* 69. *We can frame no Idea of Substance, but what we have from Matter.* When we conceive of God as a Substance (he saith there) *We find it impossible to conceive, how there should be Three Divine Persons, without Three distinct Infinite Substances.—A Person and an Intelligent Substance are Reciprocal Terms; and therefore Three distinct Persons, are three distinct Numerical Substances; and one Numerical Substance, is but one Numerical Person.* He says, that these are all Carnal Reasonings, which arise from our conceiving of God as *a Substance*; of which we can have no Idea, but what is *Material*. He concludes in the same place, and often elsewhere, *We must not seek for any other Substance in God, but Infinite Power, Wisdom and Goodness.* But as if he had been a little too liberal in that, he says, at *P.* 72. *Wisdom and Truth are the true Nature and Essence* (or Substance) *of God.* He often exhorts his Reader, particularly at *P.* 70. *To set aside all those Material Images of Essence and Substance; and to contemplate God as Eternal Truth and Wisdom, and then the Notion of God is very plain and easy.* He adds, at *P.* 138. *That which has confounded this Mystery* (of the Trinity) *has been the vain Endeavour of reducing it to Terms of Art, such as Nature, Essence, Substance, Subsistence, Person, Hypostasis, and the like.*

He presumes to say, at *P.* 139. *The Fathers nicely distinguished between Hypostasis or Person, and Nature, or Essence, or Substance; saying, that there are Three Persons, and but one Nature or Essence, or Substance. But then, when Men curiously examined the signification of these words, they found, that upon some account or other, they were unapplicable to this Mystery. For what is the Substance and Nature of God? How can Three distinct Persons have but one Numerical Substance? What is the distinction between Essence and Personality?*

Now I ask, Is this to *vindicate the Athanasian Creed*, as the Doctor undertook to do; or to slight and overthrow it? The chief Business of the *Athanasian* Creed, is to distinguish between the *Substance* and *Person* in God, to show that the Persons are Three, and the Substance but One. The Vindicator could not have more effectually given up the Catholick Doctrine to the Note-maker, than by thus frequently denying, there is any real Divine Substance at all, (which is more than his Adversary required, and than he will accept) and by saying, Men have unduly used these Terms by their applying them to God. The pretence of the Brief Notes is no other, but what the Vindicator (we have seen) often grants: that there is no difference between Substance and Person in God; and that therefore Three Divine Persons and One Divine Substance, is a senseless Contradiction.

But then 'tis as senseless to deny the Divine Substance, and to reduce the whole Notion of God to *Wisdom and Truth*; for these are Properties that cannot subsist, but in some Substance. Nor do I think, that the Trinitarians will forgo their old Explications, by *Persons* and *Substance*; for the Doctor's *new Wind-mills* of Self-consciousness and Mutual-consciousness. They will certainly abide by the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds, which suppose a Real Divine Substance, in which do subsist Three Divine Persons. It will be always Heresy with them, to deny *Homo-ousios*, or that Christ is *of Like and Equal Substance* with the Father.

I must not dismiss the Consideration of the Vindicator's Doctrine, about the Divine Substance, without noting, that his Contradictions to himself, are as frequent as his Heterodoxies. For tho he has spoken so often, so expressly, and so much, against Substance and Persons in God: yet when *the Metaphysical*

ſpecial Humour is upon him, he talks of theſe as of moſt Certain and Real Things. He ſays at *P.* 47. *The Three Perſons are Three Real Subſtantial Beings.* And again, *The Three Perſons are ſubſtantially diſtinct.* Now this is to ſay, the Three Perſons are Three diſtinct Subſtances: for that is the only poſſible meaning of, *Three Real Subſtantial Beings, ſubſtantially diſtinct.* Thus God at laſt is not only a *Subſtance*, but he is Three Real diſtinct Subſtances. This was the Hereſy of *Valentinus Gentilis*, that the Three Perſons are *Tres Spiritus ſubſtantiali numero differentes.* I wiſh the Vindicator better Succeſs with his Doctrine, than *Valentinus* met at *Geneva* and *Bern*. But the moſt pleaſant of all is, that after the Vindicator had there ſaid, *The Three Divine Perſons are ſubſtantially diſtinct*; he immediately ſubjoyns, *tho in one Undivided Subſtance.* Is it poſſible a Man ſhould give ſo little heed to what he ſays in ſo Great and Nice a Queſtion? He has not *a ſenſible* Friend in the World, that will not tell him, that 'tis as much as to ſay, *The Perſons are Three diſtinct Subſtances, and yet are but one Undivided Subſtance.* The firſt alone is Hereſy, the other ſuperadded to it, makes a groſs Contradiction. But there are greater Matters, about which I muſt ſpeak with the Vindicator.

Secondly; *Of the Perſons, their Unity, and their Diſtinction.*

As to the Divine Perſons, and the Unity or Oneneſs of each Perſon with it ſelf, and its Diſtinction from the other two Perſons; he ſays as follows.

Pag. 67. 'A Perſon is ſuch a Being, as 'has Underſtanding, Will, and Power of 'Action.

P. 66. 'They are Three diſtinct and In-'finite Minds.——Three Intelligent Beings.

P. 258. 'They are Three Holy Spirits.

P. 67. 'Theſe Three Infinite Minds are 'diſtinguiſhed *juſt as* Three Finite Created 'Minds are, *by Self-conſciouſneſs.*—Each Di-'vine Perſon has a Self-conſciouſneſs of its 'own, and knows and feels it ſelf, as diſtinct 'from the other Divine Perſons. The Fa-'ther has a Self-conſciouſneſs of his own, 'whereby he knows and feels himſelf to be 'the Father, and not the Son or Holy Ghoſt; 'The Son feels himſelf to be the Son, and 'not the Father or Holy Ghoſt. The Holy 'Ghoſt feels himſelf to be the Holy Ghoſt, 'and not the Father or Son.

P. 104. 'The Perſons are *as really* diſtinct, 'as Three Humane Perſons, or Three Men 'are.

P. 105. 'Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt 'are *as really* diſtinct Perſons, as *Peter, James* 'and *John.*

P. 149. 'We muſt believe Three diſtinct 'Divine Perſons, each of which is God.

P. 98. 'We muſt allow each Perſon to be 'a God. So alſo at *P.* 47. and elſewhere.

He not only contends each Perſon is God, and a God, but 'tis his Belief (in ſome places of his Vindication) that each Perſon is a moſt conſummate and *abſolutely perfect* God: For he aſcribes to each of them a Perſonal *abſolutely perfect* Wiſdom, Goodneſs, Juſtice and Power. I ſay, *a perſonal* perfect Wiſdom, *&c.* beſides the Wiſdom, Goodneſs, *&c.* common to them all by their *Mutual-conſciouſneſs.* His Words are theſe:

P. 81. 'There is no Contradiction, that 'three Infinite Minds ſhould be *abſolutely* 'perfect, in Wiſdom, Goodneſs and Power; 'for theſe are Perfections that may be in 'more than One.

P. 84, 85. 'The Father has his own *Per-'ſonal Wiſdom*, and by Internal Conſciouſneſs, 'all the Wiſdom of the Son and Holy Ghoſt. 'The Son has his own Perſonal Wiſdom, and 'by the ſame Conſciouſneſs, the Wiſdom of 'the Father and Holy Ghoſt. The Holy Ghoſt 'has his own Perſonal Wiſdom, and all the 'Wiſdom of the Father and Son.

At *P.* 78. He denies there is in God an Infinite Wiſdom, Goodneſs, Power, *&c.* but only perfect Wiſdom, Goodneſs, *&c.*

He acknowledges at *P.* 57. and frequently elſe-where; that if the Divine Perſons

were *distinct and separate* Persons, they would be Three Gods: but they are, he saith, distinct, but *not separate* Persons: Yet he saith there, each of these Persons is *μονάδικως singly* and *by himself*, God, though not separately God.

P. 48. 'A Finite Spirit's Numerical Oneness can be nothing else, but every Spirit's 'Unity with it self, and its distinct and separate Subsistence from all other Created 'Spirits. And this *Self-unity* can be nothing 'else but *Self-consciousness*; or that it is conscious to its own Thoughts, Reasons, Passions, *&c.* which no other Finite Created 'Spirit is conscious to, but it self.

Let us put this remarkable Doctrine concerning the Three Divine Persons into a short Creed, and then make *Brief Notes* upon it.

Dr. Sherlock's *Creed.*

"I Believe there are Three distinct Intelligent Infinite Beings, Minds, Spirits, "and Persons; distinguished *just as* Three "Finite Created Minds or Spirits are, *as* "*really* distinct as three Men, or as *Peter*, "*James* and *John*: Each of them has a "*Self-consciousness*, whereby he knows and "feels himself, as really distinct from the "other two Divine Persons. Also each of "them has his own *absolutely perfect* (for "there is *no Infinite*) Wisdom, Goodness, "and Power: and by *a Mutual-consciousness*, "each Person of these has the whole Wisdom, Power and Goodness of the two "other Persons. Each Person has his own "Understanding, Will, and Power of Action. Finally, each of these Beings, Minds, "Spirits, Persons, is God, nay each of them "singly *by himself* is *a* God.

This Creed is not only the Vindicator's Sense, but his very Words, which he has often repeated in his Book. Let us deliberately, and minutely consider, whether it be the Faith of Christians, or consistent with Scripture or Reason?

I believe there are Three Infinite Spirits, Minds and Beings. 'Tis the first time I ever heard so in my Life: That God is unus *summum Ens, one Supream Being*; that he is *Animus, Mens, Spiritus*, Πνεῦμα, Νοῦς, *a Mind, a Spirit*, is the Voice not only of Scripture, but the agreed Doctrine of all Christians. Let the Vindicator shew me, either in Holy Scripture, or in any Catholick Writer, that these words are used of God in the Plural Number. Do any of them, like this Doctor, call God *Animi Mentes*, Πνεύματα, *Minds, Spirits, Beings?* Himself is the first who has dared thus to speak in express words; and the reason is, because he saw not what they all saw, that three Infinite Minds, Spirits, or Beings, are Three Gods: For if one Infinite Mind, or Spirit, is One God, Three Infinite Minds, must be Three Gods; else we cannot distinguish between One and Three; nor discern, that the Definition being multiplied, the thing defined is also multiplied.

God, saith our Saviour (at *Joh.* 4. 24.) is *a* Spirit. No, saith the Vindicator (at *p.* 258, and *p.* 66.) God is *Three Spirits*, Minds, or Beings; and to teach the contrary, *is both Heresy and Non-sense.* Before a Man bestows such Complements, he ought well to consider on whom they may reflect: for tho he thinks, that such as *Socinus*, and the Note-maker deserve not, that common Humanity and good Manners be shown them; yet he should have had some regard for his Saviour.

Well; but what if Holy Mother *Church* be in the same Nonsense and Heresy? Mr. *Savage*, who has also written against the Brief Notes, will tell him (at *p.* 4. of his Answer) that the Lateran Council hath defined, that the Three Divine Persons are *not Three Beings*, but that *all together they make* Unum summum Ens, *One Being.* And I will tell him, that the fourth Council of *Lateran* often repeats it, that God is not *Aliud & Aliud, more Beings or Things*; but *Una quædam Res, One Thing or Being.* Mr. *Marlow* in his late Book concerning the Trinity, written

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(as ſhould ſeem by the Preface) on occaſion of the Brief Hiſtory and Brief Notes, deſcribeth God at *p.* 64. *One ſingle Being*, he adds there, *More than one Infinite Being cannot ſubſiſt.* But it were endleſs to cite particular Authorities in this matter: therefore in a word, all Catechiſms, Syſtems, Inſtitutions of Theology, Chriſtian Writers (and even Jews and Mahometans) that have ſpoken of God, do with our Saviour, define him *a* Spirit, one Mind, one Being; never three Spirits, three Minds, or three Beings.

I dare not ask it of the Vindicator, becauſe he always anſwers according to the preſent Exigence only; but I would ask any other learned and ſenſible Man, What is *the adequate Notion*, or true definition of Three Gods? I make no doubt, every ſuch Perſon would anſwer without any the leaſt Heſitation; three Infinite Spirits, or Minds, or Intelligent Beings, are three Gods: Which is the Vindicator's Definition of one God.

But to involve himſelf yet more; he believes, *Theſe Three Infinite Spirits, Minds, Beings and Perſons, are diſtinguiſh'd juſt as Three Finite Created Minds, or Spirits are; they are as really diſtinct as three Men, or as* Peter, James *and* John. This is Polytheiſm, or *Plurality of Gods* with a witneſs. 'Tis as groſs Polytheiſm, as the Greeks or Romans were ever guilty of. If a Man had asked the Greek Philoſophers, ſuppoſe *Porphyrie* and *Hierocles*, What Conception we ought to have of the three great Objects of Grecian Worſhip, *Jupiter*, *Neptune*, and *Pluto?* They would have anſwered, as the Vindicator does concerning his Trinity, they are three Divine Beings, Minds, or Spirits, diſtinguiſhed *as really*, and *juſt as* three Men, or as *Peter*, *James* and *John*. This was their Polytheiſm: not that they believ'd or worſhipped a falſe God, for that was *ſimple Idolatry*, but that they diſtinguiſh'd the Divinity into three or more Minds, and Beings *as really* and *juſt as* they diſtinguiſhed three Men, or as *Peter*, *James* and *John*.

The Vindicator will not be able to give a Rational and Intelligible Account, why it ſhould not as much be Polytheiſm in him to diſtinguiſh *as really*, and *juſt as* the Heathens did. It will not excuſe him, to ſay, that *Jupiter*, *Neptune* and *Pluto*, were but ſuppoſed Divine Perſons, but his are really Divine Perſons; for granting ſo much to him for this time, yet to miſtake the Object of their Faith and Worſhip, was only Idolatry; their Polytheiſm conſiſted in diſtinguiſhing the Object of Worſhip, the Divinity, into more Minds or Beings *as really*, and *juſt as* the three Men, *Peter*, *James* and *John* are diſtinguiſh'd.

Therefore the more Learned Trinitarians have been ſo far from ſaying, the three Divine Perſons are diſtinguiſh'd *juſt as Peter*, *James* and *John*, that they never durſt ſay, they are *really* diſtinct, but modally; ſomething more diſtinguiſh'd, (they ſay) between one another, than from their common Eſſence; yet not *really* diſtinct. They conſidered that real Diſtinction makes Alterity and Diverſity; but the Unity of God does not permit that he ſhould be *Alter*, *Another*, either from Himſelf, or from any thing that is Himſelf. Since the Eſſence of a thing is *that*, *by which it is what it is*; whatſoever things are really diſtinct things, muſt alſo be eſſentially diſtinct; but now the three Divine Perſons having but One Numerical Undivided Eſſence, by Confeſſion of all Trinitarians; therefore they cannot be Eſſentially diſtinct, and therefore not Really, but Modally only. I ſuppoſe therefore the Vindicator's Friends will prevail with him, to abate (in his next) very much of his *as really diſtinct*, and *diſtinguiſhed juſt as* theſe three Men, *Peter*, *James* and *John*.

Each of theſe Divine Perſons has a Self-conſciouſneſs, whereby He knows and feels himſelf as diſtinct from the other two Divine Perſons. This Aſſertion implies what he afterwards adds, that *each of them has his own proper Underſtanding, Will, and Power of Action.* Now I ſay, this is ſo great and clear an Alterity, or Diverſity, that no greater can be ſuppoſed between any ſort of Intelligent Beings.

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God and his Creatures are not more truly *divers*, than by having each their own proper Understandings, Wills, and Powers of Action, and by really Being, and Knowing, and Feeling themselves as distinct from one another.

Intelligent Beings may indeed be farther *differenced* by Essential Perfections, or by Degrees of Perfection in the same Nature; as Angels are differenced from Men by Essential Perfections, and *Peter* from *John* by Degrees of Human Perfection, and God from his Creatures both by Essential Perfections, and by Degrees of those Perfections that are common to him and them: But the meer Alterity or *Diversity* of Intelligent Beings, or Minds, is no other but what the Vindicator has imputed to the Divine Persons themselves; namely that each such Being has his own Understanding, Will and Power of Action; and both is and knows himself as really distinct from all others. Persons or Spirits so distinct are as really *divers*, or are no more one another, than the Angel *Michael* is the Man *Peter*; or than *Peter* is *Charles*, the Lion in the Tower.

The Vindicator has discourſed all along so inconsequently, that I have no hopes he can advert to a Demonstration, that requires any Attention of Mind: but I cannot doubt that others of his Party will readily own, he has very much overshot himself; and that there cannot be such Alterity or Diversity in God, the most simple of all Beings. Can there be any thing in God as divers and distinct, as *Michael* and *Peter*; nay, as God and his Creatures? They will not say it; for 'tis to deny his Simplicity and Unity, and to compound him not only of several and divers Parts, but of divers and several Beings, which is too manifestly both Heterodox and Impossible. Can He be *most Simple and Uncompounded*, who is made up of three distinct Understandings, Wills, and Powers of Action; and who is constituted of three Beings, or Minds, that know and feel themselves distinct from one another, as distinct as *Michael* and *Peter*, and even as God and his Creatures? If so, then it may also be said, that *God and his Creatures are One most Simple Uncompounded Being*. That is the next Paradox the Vindicator has to defend. As for his Mutual consciousness, I shall demonstrate in its proper place, that it does not only not heal these Breaches, but incurably widens them, because (I shall shew) 'tis so far from being, or effecting any real Unity and Simplicity, that it implieth and supposeth an Essential Diversity, and a separate Existence of the Three Persons.

Also, each of these Persons has his own Personal absolutely perfect (for there is no Infinite) *Wisdom, Power and Goodness, and by a Mutual consciousness, each of them has all the Wisdom, Power, and Goodness of the two other Persons.* This is still somewhat a clearer Explication of his Doctrine of Three God's, than any we have yet had: For since each of these Spirits, Minds, or Beings has his own Personal *absolutely perfect* Wisdom, Power and Goodness; and that besides the Consciousness and Sensation of the *absolutely perfect* Wisdom, Power, *&c.* of the other two; there can be nothing wanting to make each Person of them *an absolutely perfect God*. If there be indeed three *really distinct* Spirits, or Persons, each of which has his own Personal absolutely perfect Wisdom, *&c.* and therefore is an absolutely perfect God, I doubt whether there be a Man in the World (besides the Vindicator) who will not acknowledg upon that Supposition, that there are three really distinct and absolutely perfect Gods. But as far as he seems to be sunk in his Incogitance, I will put to him one Argument.

'Tis the most general and allowed Proof that there is but One God; because one God, or one Infinite Wisdom, Power, and Goodness, is sufficient, as sufficient as a thousand; and there cannot be in God any thing *that is needless, useless, or in vain*. Therefore I say, if any one of the Vindicator's Divine Spirits, Minds, Beings, or Persons, as suppose *the Father* has *a Personal* Infinite (or absolutely perfect) Wisdom, Power and Goodness, there can be no need or occa-

occasion for any other Divine Mind, Spirit, Being, or Person; more such Minds were *needless, useless, and in vain.* And from hence it clearly follows, that the Unitarians have *the very same Evidence*, that there is but one absolutely perfect Mind, Spirit, Being and Person, and but one absolutely perfect Wisdom, Power and Goodness, that there is for but One God.

And whereas Mutual-consciousness makes *the Beginning, Middle and End* of Dr. *Sherlock's* Answer to the Brief Notes; I would know, of what use it can be? What Perfection can it be to any of the three Divine Persons, to be conscious to the other two, when nothing is gained by it, no Wisdom, no Power, no Goodness? For without such Mutual-consciousness, each Person has *his own Personal* absolutely perfect Wisdom, Power and Goodness. The Vindicator has found out a new Attribute in God, Mutual-consciousness, but will never be able to tell how 'tis any Perfection: Nay, it seemeth to be an Imperfection; for to know the same things over and over and over by Mutual-consciousness, which were before fully known by Self-consciousness, is the same in Knowledg, that *Tautology* is in Speech; they are both needless Repetitions, and therefore the first can no more be in God, than the other in wise Men.

At *p.* 78, and 79. he contends, that 'tis not well said, that God is *an infinite* Being, or Spirit, or has *Infinite* Wisdom, Justice, Power or Goodness; because no Being can know what is not to be known; no Goodness or Justice can go beyond the measure, that is, can do excessive or unjust things; no Power can do impossible things. But this is a weak Allegation, tho he proposes it with his usual Confidence and Disdain, to bear him out in this new and impious Heresy, that the Perfections of God are not Infinite. For things Unjust or Excessive are not the Objects of Goodness or Justice; and 'tis as Ridiculous as 'tis Heretical, to pretend that the Goodness and Justice of God cannot be Infinite, because He cannot do things that are either Excessive or Unjust; for this is a chief Reason why we ascribe to God Infinite Goodness and Justice, even because he can do nothing at all that is Excessive or Unjust. I cannot doubt, but that upon second thoughts, the Vindicator himself will discern, that it was sillily urged, *The Justice of God is not Infinite, because He cannot do unjust things.* As for things *not knowable* and *not possible*, they are *Nullities*, and no more the Objects of Wisdom and Power, or of any other Faculty, than things Unjust are of Justice; and therefore 'tis as vainly and impertinently required, that God should know or do such things by his Infinite Wisdom and Power, as that He should do unjust things by his Infinite Justice.

But I will farther tell this Opposer of the Divine Perfections, why it is said the Goodness, Justice, Wisdom, and Power of God are each of them Infinite. It is so said, because there is in God an inexhaustible Fountain of Goodness and Justice; that is, he hath an indefectible Propensity, and an Infinite Inclination of doing always and to all that which is just and good. Also the things he knoweth, and which he has and can do, being innumerable and without End, his Wisdom and Power are also Infinite, or without End.

Finally, *He believes each of these Beings, Minds, Spirits, Persons, is God, nay, each of them singly by himself is a God.* He grants, and says, at *p.* 87, and 97. That if the Divine Persons were *separate* Persons as well as distinct Persons, they were without doubt three Gods. But now are not they separate Persons, each of which is singly and *by himself* a Person, and God; for what is a separate Person, or a separate God, but he who singly and *by himself* is a Person or God? *Single, separate,* and *by himself,* are equivalent Terms with all Men but the Vindicator. *By himself* is the very English of the Latin *separatus*, or separate; therefore in saying here, that each Person *by himself* is God, he hath granted that each Person is *separately* God; which is the thing he all along denies and abhors.

abhors, as a giving up the Queſtion to his Adverſary.

But he ſays expreſly, each of theſe Perſons is *a* God. None of his Party ever ſaid ſo; they will ſay each of theſe Perſons is God, or is *the* God, becauſe each of them has the Divine Eſſence, which is common to all three; but that each Perſon is *a* God, is without doubt an heretical Form of Speech, and neceſſarily introduces three Gods. For *the* before a Subſtantive, denotes the Unity of the thing ſpoken of, but *a* always ſuppoſes more things of the ſame kind. Thus we ſay *the* Sun, *the* Moon, *the* Earth, becauſe there is but one Sun, one Moon, one Earth; and for the ſame reaſon we ſay *God*, or *the* God; but we ſay *a* Spirit, *a* Man, *a* Perſon, becauſe there are more Spirits, Men, and Perſons. Therefore he that ſays, there are three Perſons, each of which is *a* God; or that ſays, the Father is *a* God or the Son is *a* God, or the Holy Ghoſt is *a* God; ſuch an one (I ſay) profeſſes to believe more Gods. I appeal in this matter to all learned Men, of what Perſwaſion ſoever; and even to all who do but underſtand Grammar. But I muſt profeſs my wonder, that ſome Trinitarians in their Explications of their (ſuppoſed) Trinity, are no more careful of avoiding ſuch open *Polytheiſm*, it being a Guilt next to Atheiſm.

Thirdly; *Of the Unity of the Perſons, and how they make but one God.*

Laſt of all; As to the Unity of the three Divine Perſons with one another, and how they all make but one God: He largely deſcribeth it in his 4*th* Section, from *Pag.* 46, to *p.* 86. But the ſum of all is this.

'A Finite Spirit's Unity or Oneneſs with 'it ſelf, is no other thing but its *Self-conſciouſneſs*, or that it knows and feels its own 'Thoughts, Actions, and Paſſions. But if 'either Finite or Infinite Spirits, Minds, or 'Perſons are mutually conſcious; that is, 'are *internally and univerſally conſcious* to one 'anothers Thoughts, Wills, Actions, and 'Paſſions, this maketh them to be *truly and* '*properly Numerically One Spirit*; for (*p.* 49.) 'they are hereby as much one with each o'ther, as every Spirit is one with himſelf; 'and (*p.* 56.) they are hereby united to 'each other, as every Man is to himſelf. 'To make three Spirits, or Perſons numeri'cally one, it is not enough, that one of 'them is perfectly conſcious to all the reſt: 'they muſt all of them be mutually conſci'ous; that is, each of them perfectly con'ſcious to all the reſt. Thus God is con'ſcious to all his Creatures, to all their 'Thoughts, Actions, and Paſſions, as fully 'conſcious as themſelves are; but they are 'not hereby made one with him, becauſe 'they not being conſcious to his Knowledg 'and Will, there is *not a Mutual-conſciouſneſs* 'between God and them. The Mutual 'conſciouſneſs of the three Divine Perſons, 'is the *Perichoreſis* and *Circuminceſſion* men'tioned by the Fathers and the Schools. 'For *Perichoreſis*, or that the Father is in 'the Son and Spirit, and the Son in the Fa'ther and Spirit, and the Spirit in the Fa'ther and Son, is nothing elſe but their uni'verſal Mutual-conſciouſneſs. We ought not 'to entertain a groſs material Idea of the '*Perichoreſis*, as if the three diſtinct Divine 'Perſons were in one another by a mutual 'Contract of Parts, for they have no Parts; '*the only Union and Perichoreſis* of Minds and 'Spirits is, that they are conſcious each to 'others Thoughts and Wills, as perfectly 'and inwardly as to their own. And thus 'alſo it is, that the three Divine Perſons are 'one God; they are one God, and in one 'another *by perfect Mutual-conſciouſneſs.*

The Vindicator often ſays, that this Explication of the Trinity, maketh a Trinity in Unity as eaſy and intelligible as the Notion of One God, or but one who is God. But being aware that 'tis not enough that an Explication be intelligible, if it be not alſo the true Explication; therefore he pretends to prove this Mutual-conſciouſneſs of the Father, Son, and Spirit, from *Joh.* 1. 18. & 10. 15, 30. 38. & 16. 14, 15. 1 *Cor.* 2. 10, 11.

Then

Then for the Fathers, tho they do not once name Mutual-conſciouſneſs, yet he thinketh they meant it. He alledges a few Paſſages out of *Gregory Nyſſen* and St. *Auſtin*, who are all the Fathers he quotes, and his Citations are not only not to his purpoſe, but ſome of them clearly overthrow it. I ſhall ſhew him the reſpect, to conſider what he hath ſaid.

1. Whereas he ſaith, that Mutual-conſciouſneſs maketh the three Divine Spirits, to be *as truly and properly numerically one*; and *as much one, as each Spirit and every Man is one with himſelf*. If this were indeed true, it would as much over-do what the Vindicator expects from it, as he thinketh all former Explications are ſhort of their Deſign. For the Unitarians deſire no more, than that it be owned, God is as truly and properly numerically one, *as every Spirit and Man is one with himſelf*; for every Spirit and Man is ſo one with himſelf, as to be *but one Perſon*.

Had the Vindicator no way to defend the Athanaſian Creed, but by running into Hereſy? could he make out the Unity of the Trinity, no other way but (as the Creed ſpeaks) *by confounding the Perſons*, or by making them but one Perſon? I challenge him, or any other for him, to avoid this Conſequence of his Doctrine. He ſaith in above twenty places, this Mutual-conſciouſneſs maketh the three Divine Spirits and Perſons as much one with one another, as any Spirit or Man is one with himſelf; then ſay I, they are but one Perſon; for that is the Oneneſs or Unity (the only Unity) of every Spirit or Man with himſelf. No Spirit or Man has any other but a Perſonal Unity with himſelf.

2. Mutual-conſciouſneſs cannot be a good Explication of the (pretended) Trinity, becauſe it will equally ſalve the moſt abſurd Doctrine of the Tranſubſtantiation. For as, according to the Vindicator's Doctrine, *the Godhead*, or the One true God, is numerically One, tho there are three Infinite Perſons, each of which is God, and a God; becauſe theſe three Perſons are mutually conſcious to, or have an inward Senſation of one another: So will a Papiſt ſay, there is but one *Body-head*, or but one Numerical Body of Chriſt; but in the Unity of this *Body-head* or Body, there is firſt the Original Body of Chriſt, and then abundance of Sacred *Hoſts* in divers places, each of which is a true Body of Chriſt, and is by Mutual Senſation and Conſciouſneſs (for there is no Senſation without Conſciouſneſs) numerically one Body with the Original Body in Heaven. 'Tis true, the Body in Heaven is the Source and Fountain of the reſt, as the Father is of the other Divine Perſons, but they are all *ſubſtantially and numerically* one Body, by Mutual-conſciouſneſs or Senſation. And this mutual inward Senſation or Conſciouſneſs they muſt needs have, becauſe they are all of them *Perſonally united* to one Infinite Spirit or Perſon, who (as all Trinitarians ſay) is *Whole and All* everywhere preſent, *Totus in toto, & totus in qualibet parte*. By this Explication or *Hypotheſis*, all Mr. *Johnſon*'s Demonſtrations againſt the Tranſubſtantiation, are made to vaniſh into Smoke. All his Objections from the nature of *Time* and *Extenſion* are nothing; they are all ſalved by Mutual-conſciouſneſs of *the Hoſts* with the Body in Heaven; for Dr. *Sherlock* has aſſured us, that Mutual-conſciouſneſs or Senſation, doth make *an Eſſential, Subſtantial and Numerical Unity* or Oneneſs between any number of Perſons or Things. The Reaſon holds for *Things* as well as *Perſons*, and for a thouſand as well as for three.

3. If, as the Vindicator often ſays, Mutual-conſciouſneſs is *the only Union of Spirits or Minds*, ſuch a Mutual-conſciouſneſs by which they are univerſally, or wholly, or perfectly conſcious to each other; this would as much prejudice the Incarnation, or Hypoſtatical Union, as the Vindicator hopes it will help the Doctrine of the Trinity. The Vindicator confeſſes at *p.* 269, and 270, that the Human Nature, or Reaſonable Soul of Chriſt, is not univerſally, or wholly conſcious to the Divine Perſon of the Son; yet he ſays, in perhaps forty places, that a Mutual-conſciouſneſs to all one anothers Thoughts and Wills and Actions, is neceſſary to make an Union of Minds or Spirits. I ſay, it follows from theſe

Premiſes, that the Reaſonable Soul or Spirit of the Lord Chriſt is not united to the Divine Perſon of the Son. If univerſal Conſciouſneſs is *the only poſſible Union* of Spirits, 'tis impoſſible there ſhould be an Incarnation, or an Hypoſtatical or Perſonal Union of the Divine and Human Spirits in Chriſt.

The Vindicator ſeems to have been, in ſome meaſure, aware of this Objecton. For in the Concluſion of his Book, when he comes to the Doctrine of the Incarnation, or Hypoſtatical Union, he ſays, "Where diffe-"rent Natures are united into one Perſon, "this univerſal Conſciouſneſs is ſeated only "in the Superior Nature; and in the Infe-"rior, only ſo far as the Nature is capable, "and as the Perſonal Union requires. But I will forgive the Vindicator, if he can ſo, eſcape from me.

Firſt; If, as he ſays, a partial Conſciouſneſs in the Inferior Nature be ſufficient to effect an Hypoſtatical or Perſonal Union, it will follow, that all pious Men are hypoſtatically or perſonally united to the Holy Ghoſt. For the Holy Spirit is univerſally conſcious to all their Thoughts and Actions, and they are partially conſcious to his Suggeſtions and Motions, and that by ſuch *an Internal Senſation* as they are to their own Thoughts and Inclinations. They cannot diſcern one from the other.

Secondly; If *a Partial Conſciouſneſs* between two or more Spirits, where but one of them is univerſally conſcious to the reſt, will make them numerically one Perſon, or (what is the ſame thing) will effect an Hypoſtatical or Perſonal Union; then certainly where two or more Spirits are *univerſally conſcious* to one another, it muſt much more make them numerically one Perſon, or effect an Hypoſtatical or Perſonal Union. From whence it will follow, that the three Divine Perſons being univerſally conſcious to one another, are numerically one Perſon, and are hypoſtatically and perſonally united. But this every one knows is Hereſy, and contrary to the Athanaſian Creed, which forbids us *to confound the Perſons*.

Thirdly; But the truth is, a Partial Mutual-conſciouſneſs in one of the Spirits (though the other be univerſally conſcious) is not ſufficient to make a Perſonal Union, or to make two or more Perſons to be numerically one Perſon. The Reaſon is this, ſince univerſal Mutual-Conſciouſneſs is therefore ſaid (by the Vindicator) to make more Spirits to be numerically one, becauſe *in every one of them* it amounts to as much as, and is equivalent to the Self-conſciouſneſs or Self-unity of each Spirit with it ſelf; for it makes more Spirits as conſcious to one another (and therefore as numerically one) as every Spirit is to it ſelf: from hence it neceſſarily follows, that a Mutual Conſciouſneſs which is not univerſal in both Spirits, cannot effect a Perſonal Union, or make them numerically one Perſon, becauſe 'tis undeniable that one of theſe Spirits (the inferior Nature or Spirit) has not ſuch a Mutual-conſciouſneſs with the other Spirit, as is equal to its own Self-conſciouſneſs, which makes it Self-unity.

Hitherto I have ſo argued, as to ſuppoſe, with the Vindicator, that ſuch a Mutual-conſciouſneſs as he has deſcribed when 'tis univerſal, may have the effect he ſuppoſeth; that is, may effect a Numerical Oneneſs or Unity, and have only ſhewn, that however it has ſeveral ſuch Heretical Conſequences, that it muſt not be admitted by him or any other. For we have ſeen it maketh the three Divine Perſons to be but one Perſon, becauſe (he ſaith) it makes them as much one, as each Spirit, Perſon, or Man is one with himſelf. Alſo this *Hypotheſis* will do as much Service to the Tranſubſtantiation, as to the Trinity; for it will make as Subſtantial and Numerical an Unity between the *Hoſts* and the Body in Heaven, as between the three Divine Spirits. Farther, it deſtroys the Hypoſtatical Union; for 'tis plain that a Partial Conſciouſneſs between the Human and Divine Spirits in the Lord Chriſt, cannot make a Perſonal Union, or make them numerically one Perſon, becauſe in his Human Spirit 'tis not equal to that Self-conſciouſneſs, which the Vindicator affirms to be the Self-unity of every Intelligent Being. But now I ſhall prove, that,

4. Mutu-

4. Mutual Conſciouſneſs, notwithſtanding the Vindicator's confident Affirmation, and frequent Repetition of it, doth not indeed make the three Divine Perſons to be numerially one, or ſo one, as each Spirit and every Man is one with himſelf; nay, it neither is nor effecteth any real Unity at all. For though he is careful to ſuppoſe, that the three Perſons are mutually conſcious *by an internal Senſation*, and that they are conſcious *to all* the Thoughts, Wills and Actions of one another, as each Perſon of them, and as every Man is internally conſcious to all his own Thoughts and Actions, all which he thinketh muſt make them numerically one Spirit and one God; becauſe (in his Opinion) it amounts to as much as, and is equivalent to, that Self-conſciouſneſs which is (he ſaith) the Self-unity of each Spirit, and every Man with himſelf. Tho (I ſay) he is careful to ſuppoſe thus much, yet I ſhall mind him of a thing which will ruin his whole *Hypotheſis*; even this, that the three Divine Spirits or Perſons, tho they are univerſally and internally conſcious to one another, yet becauſe they are not *in the ſame manner* conſcious to one anothers Thoughts and Actions, as each Spirit of them and each Man is conſcious to his own Thoughts and Actions; therefore the Mutual-conſciouſneſs which he ſuppoſes they have, cannot make them numerically one Spirit, or one God. None of them is conſcious to the Thoughts and Actions of the other two *as his own*, but as riſing *in* and *from* the other Perſons; but each of theſe Spirits, and every Man is conſcious to his own Thoughts and Actions, as riſing *in* and *from* himſelf, from his own Perſonal Underſtanding, Will, and Power of Action.

Let me hear the Vindicator ſay, that the Son (for Example) knows and feels the Thoughts and Actions of the Father and Spirit, not as the Thoughts and Actions of the Father and Spirit, but *as his own Perſonal Thoughts and Actions*, or as originated in his own Perſon; and I will allow that ſuch Conſciouſneſs doth look ſomewhat like a numerical Oneneſs or Unity. But I will demonſtrate to him, that ſo to ſay, is both Hereſy, and a Contradiction.

It is Heretical, becauſe then the Father's Perſonal Action of *Generation* would be known and felt by the Son, *as the Action of the Son*; that is, the Son would know and feel that he begets himſelf. Alſo *the mutual Love* of the Father, and of the Image, or Son, whereby (as this Arianaſian Doctor feigns) the Holy Spirit proceeds from them, would be known and felt by the Holy Spirit, as his own Perſonal Action, nor as the Action of the Father and Son. Both which are Heretical when affirmed by any.

But beſides, that it is Hereſy, 'tis alſo a Contradiction: 'Tis juſt as much a Contradiction, as to ſay, that the Perſon and Perſonal Underſtanding of the Son, is the Perſon and Perſonal Underſtanding of the Father. If we confound the Perſons and Perſonal Thoughts and Actions of the Father, Son and Spirit, we confound alſo their Perſonal Underſtandings, Wills, and Powers of Action. If each Perſon of them has his Perſonal Underſtanding, Will, and Power of Action, he has alſo his Perſonal Thoughts and Actions; and conſequently, the Son cannot feel the Thoughts and Actions of the Father, *as his own* Perſonal Thoughts and Actions, but as the Thoughts and Actions of the Father. But if ſo, all Men muſt grant, that ſuch Mutual-conſciouſneſs of the three Divine Perſons, neither is, or effecteth a Numerical Unity, or any Unity at all. It cannot, I ſay, make them one Spirit, or One God, but leaves them as much three as other *ſeparate* Spirits or Beings are. For 'tis ſuch a Conſciouſneſs as may be, and actually is, between the moſt oppoſite contrary and ſeparate Natures and Spirits. For all Men are after this manner conſcious both to the Holy Spirit, and to the Tempter. We are conſcious to the Suggeſtions and Motions of the firſt, and to the Temptations of the other, *by an internal Conſciouſneſs*; nay by ſuch a perfect intimate Conſciouſneſs, that we do not always diſcern them from our own Perſonal Thoughts, or the Motions and Actings of our own Spirits; which is ſome-

what a *closer Consciousness* than the Vindicator has supposed, or dares suppose between the three Divine Persons; and yet it leaves us separate Beings and Spirits, both from the Holy Spirit, and from the Tempter.

5. If there were indeed such a thing as the Vindicator's mutual Consciousness, I do affirm, it would be so far from being, or from effecting a numerical Unity or Oneness, that it would be the very thing which would most of all prove the three (pretended) Divine Persons are numerically three Spirits and three Gods. For since, according to the Vindicator's Descriptions, each of these Spirits or Persons has his own Personal Understanding, Will and Power of Action, and his own Personal absolutely perfect Wisdom, Power and Goodness; three such Persons are so far from being one Spirit or one God, by Consciousness to each others Wisdom, Power and Goodness, that the more such Persons are mutually conscious, so much the more their *separate* Existence and Divinity is proved. For the more that any of these Spirits knows and feels of Thoughts and Actions arising in the other Spirits or Persons, and to which he is only conscious, but is not the Personal Fountain of them; the more, and more certainly, he must needs know and feel, that himself has a divers and separate Existence from them, and therefore (being an Infinite Person or Spirit) is a divers and separate God.

I challenge the Vindicator to tell me any other possible way for three Divine Persons to be assured of their separate Existence and Divinity; that is, that they are three God's, but by Mutual-consciousness, or by knowing and feeling (as he speaks) the Thoughts and Actions of one another, *not as their own*, but as the Thoughts and Actions of other Divine Spirits. How should the Father, for example, know He is a separate Spirit and God from the Son, but by knowing and feeling the Actions of the Son, not as his (the Fathers) Actions, but as the Actions and Thoughts of another Divine and Infinite Person? It was therefore a great Incogitance in the Vindicator, to urge the (pretended) Mutual-consciousness of the three (pretended) Divine Persons, as their numerical Unity or Oneness, when it demonstrates them to be numerically three separate and divers Beings, Spirits and Gods.

Had the Vindicator said, there are three Infinite Spirits, who are mutually conscious, THEREFORE there are three Gods; all Mankind would have allowed his Consequence, as certain and self-evident from that Proposition. But to say there are three Infinite Spirits, conscious to one another, THEREFORE there is but one God; this all Men of Sense will laugh at, as a *palpable* Falshood. 'Tis a Contradiction in the Terms, to tell us of *One only God mutually conscious*; for in plainer English 'tis to say, *One only God conscious to, or with other Gods.* Or, *One only God conscious to more Gods.*

6. But the great Matter is still behind, that after all, our Blessed Saviour himself has declared, that there is not this Mutual-consciousness between the (supposed) Divine Persons, which the Vindicator has made to be the Substance of his Answer to the Brief Notes, and the Brief History. *Of that day and hour* (the day and hour of the last Judgment) *knoweth, no not the Angels which are in Heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only*; *Mark* 13. 32. *Mat.* 24. 36. Here it is expressly denied, that the Son knows the time of the last Judgment, and as clearly intimated that the Father, and *the Father only* (therefore not the Holy Ghost, if we take the Holy Ghost for a particular Person) knows that time. Therefore, say I, the Son and Holy Ghost are not conscious to all the Knowledg, Will and Thoughts of the Father, and consequently are not Gods, or God.

To avoid this Argument, the Vindicator and his Party answer, that Christ in that Text speaks of himself, only as he is a Man, not as he is God, or *a* God. Well, but how shall we salve the Honour of the Holy Ghost, for 'tis there also said, that *the Father only* knoweth that day and hour? Why, for that, the word *Father* here does not signify *the Father only*, but includes the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. But when mention is made of the *Father* and the *Son* in the same Period, and they are opposed to each other, 'tis much

much that neither the Son ſhould ſignify the Son, (for the Human Nature, or Chriſt *as Man*, according to the Trinitarians, is not the Son) nor the Father ſignify the Father, but the Father and two other Perſons. If this be not to form the Scriptures to our preconceived Opinions, and not our Opinions by the Scriptures; let the Vindicator himſelf tell me what is? Should a Socinian diſtort the known ſenſe and uſe of Words at this rate, what Out-cries ſhould we have againſt them!

Nor was it our Saviour's manner to anſwer after this equivocal deluſory faſhion: But when the Diſciples were more inquiſitive than he liked of, he was not wont to ſhift off the matter by an Equivocation, but plainly to tell them, They asked after what 'twas not permitted to them to know. *Wilt thou at this time reſtore the Kingdom to Iſrael?* ſay the Diſciples at *Acts* 1. 6, 7. *'Tis not for you to know*, ſaith our Saviour. How unlike is this direct ſincere Anſwer to that which the Trinitarians have made for him about the Day of Judgment? For their Anſwer runs thus; "As to the day and hour of Judgment, of "which you enquire, none knoweth it, not "the Angels, not the Son himſelf, but my Fa"ther only. But when I ſay the Son, that "is, *I my ſelf* know it not, I mean (*ſaith he* "*to himſelf*) according to my Human Nature, "which indeed is not the Son; and when I "ſay, only my Father knoweth it, I mean "(*ſaith he again to himſelf*) only my Father "*and my ſelf*, and the Holy Ghoſt. This is ſuch *an over-grown Equivocation*, and Mental Reſervation, as in our Town would paſs for a groſs Lie; but that the Vindicator and his Party have aſſured us, that our Saviour himſelf ſpake thus. But I do not think any ſenſible and honeſt Man will believe 'em, if he conſiders it twice.

'Tis thus alſo that they have dealt with God himſelf, ſpeaking in the firſt Commandment; *Thou ſhalt have no other Gods but Me*, ſaith God in the words of the firſt Commandment. And to render this his Soveraign Revelation and Will the more awful and regarded by us, he delivered it in Thunders that ſhook the Heavens and the Earth. Notwithſtanding this, and tho every one knows that the Stile of Laws is plain and ſimple and the words to be underſtood in a popular familiar Senſe, becauſe they are delivered to the meaneſt as well as the higheſt Capacities; yet have thoſe who call themſelves the Orthodox and the Catholick Party eluded this Revelation and Law, to which all the reſt refer, and on which they depend and have made room for *other Gods beſides him*. *Thou ſhalt have no other Gods beſides Me*; that is, (ſay they) Thou ſhalt have no other Gods but *Us*, no other Gods, but God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghoſt: Thou ſhalt have no other Gods, but three Infinite Almighty, All-knowing Perſons; whereof one is the Father, another his Son, and the third an holy Spirit diſtinct from both.

I perſwade my ſelf that no Man can think that ſo much as one Perſon of the ſix hundred thouſand *Iſraelites* who aſſembled to hear God ſpeak, did (or poſſibly could) underſtand that to be his meaning; but on the contrary, when they heard, *Thou ſhalt have no other Gods but Me*, they did, and their Poſterity to this day do, underſtand it no otherways but thus, *Thou ſhalt never know or own more than one Divine Perſon, even Me who now ſpeak to thee.* When Points of Faith are turned into Laws, we ought to be careful how we elude their plain and obvious ſenſe *by Subtilties*; for ſuch things will not excuſe the Breach of Laws, eſpecially of the firſt and chief Law, the ground of the reſt, to which they all refer as their chief Deſign. Rather we ſhould interpret all other dubious and diſputable Scripture-Expreſſions by ſuch ſolemn Principal and Chief Revelations and Laws. The Vindicator, 'tis ſaid, is writing a Book to prove, that there are more Perſons (the Son and Spirit) beſides the Eternal *God and Father of our Lord Chriſt*, who are Gods, or God, that is, he is writing a Book againſt the firſt Commandment. And I confeſs, that as his Party have ordered the vulgar Editions and Tranſlations of the Holy Bible, it will be no hard matter to alledg ſome very plauſible Texts to ſuch as know not the Deceits that have been

been uſed, to make ſome Texts of Scripture contradict others. But I challenge him before-hand, to produce but one ſuch Proof or Text for his purpoſe, as is not of ſuch *ſuſpected Credit* and Authority in the Originals, that no prudent Man would build any thing on it, much leſs oppoſe it to the firſt Commandment, or is ſo *manifeſtly faulty in the Engliſh Tranſlation*, that ſome of the moſt Learned of his own Party do reject it as no Proof; or finally, is not only *not to his purpoſe*, but proves what the Unitarians contend for, the Unity of God, or that *God is One*. But this was a Digreſſion; I left off at our Saviour's words, *Of that day and hour* (the day and hour of the laſt Judgment) *nons knoweth but my Father only*, which I hope were ſufficiently vindicated from the Perverſions of Dr. *Sherlock*, and others.

But let our Saviour ſay what he will, and as expreſly as he will, the Doctor will prove againſt him, that there is this perfect Mutual-conſciouſneſs between Him, the Holy Spirit, and the Father.

His firſt Objection is from *Joh.* 1. 18. *The only Begotten Son, which is in the Boſom of the Father, hath declared him.* To be *in the Boſom of another*, ſignifies, ſays the Vindicator, to be conſcious to that Perſon's Mind, and moſt intimate Secrets; therefore the Son is conſcious to the Father. *Anſw.* But why did not the Vindicator produce ſome Texts to confirm this Interpretation? The truth is, the Scripture-Senſe of this Phraſe, *To be in the Boſom of another*, is this, *to be moſt dear* to that Perſon, as is clear from *Deut.* 28. 54, 56. 2 *Sam.* 12. 3. So the Senſe of the objected Text is only this, The only Begotten Son, who is moſt dear to the Father, hath declared him, *i. e.* hath made known his Will and Commands in the Goſpel.

He objects, *Joh.* 10. 15. *As the Father knoweth me, ſo know I the Father. Anſw.* If the Vindicator had look'd into the Critical Commentators of his own Party, he would have ſeen, that *to know* in this Text is *to love*. But allowing him his Senſe of the words; I anſwer, as much is propheſied of all Chriſtians in Goſpel-times, *Jer.* 31. 34. *They ſhall all know me, from the greateſt to the leaſt of them.* Nor does [*as*] here note Equality of Knowledge in the Son, but Likeneſs only; as at *Mat.* 5. 48. *Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect.* Therefore the Senſe is, the Father knoweth me, and I alſo know the Father (not by Natural or Congenit Conſciouſneſs, but) by his Revelation. See *Rev.* 1. 1.

Joh. 10. 30. *I and the Father are One.* This Oneneſs or In-being, ſaith the Vindicator, is a Mutual-conſciouſneſs and inward Senſation of each other. *Anſw.* But our Saviour explains this Oneneſs, to be ſuch an Unity or Oneneſs as is (or ſhould be) among all Chriſtians; which is not by Mutual-conſciouſneſs or inward Senſation, but Mutual and Inward Love of one another. *John* 17. 11. *Father, —keep thoſe whom thou haſt given me, that they may be One as we are.* Ver. 22. *That they may be One, even as we are One.*

Again, he urgeth *Joh.* 10. 38. *The Father is in me, and I in him.* The Vindicator inſiſteth much on this, as a clear Indication of an inward Conſciouſneſs between the Father and Son. *Anſw.* But here again our Saviour has otherways explain'd himſelf, namely thus, that he means ſuch an In-being as is between all Chriſtians and the Father; an In-being by Love, and the Gift of the Spirit, on the part of the Father, and on our part, by Love, and Obedience, and Profeſſion of the Truth: *Joh.* 17. 21. *That they all may be One, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they may be One in us.* 1 Joh. 3. 24. *He that keepeth his* (God's) *Commandments, dwelleth in Him, and he in him.* 1 Joh. 3. 13. *Hereby we know we dwell in him, and he in us, becauſe he hath given us of his Spirit.* Ver. 15. *Whoſoever ſhall confeſs, that Jeſus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.* Ver. 16. *He that dwelleth in Love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.*

Joh. 16. 15. *All things that the Father hath are mine. Anſw.* See what hath been ſatisfactorily ſaid to this, in the Brief Hiſtory, *pag.* 103.

1 Cor. 2. 10, 11. *The Spirit ſearcheth all things, yea the deep things of God. For what*

Man

Men knoweth the things of a Man, but the Spirit of a Man, which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no Man, but the Spirit of God. Answ. The Emphasis lies here; that the Spirit knows the things of God, *even as* the Spirit of a Man knows the things of a Man. Now admitting that the Holy Ghost or Spirit were a Person, as many Unitarians (particularly the *Bidellians* and *Arians*) believe he is, chief of the holy Spirits or Angels, and called *the Spirit* by way of Excellence, and *the Holy Spirit*, to discriminate him from Satan, who is chief of the Wicked and Apostate Spirits or Angels. Admitting, I say, that the Holy Spirit is a Person, yet what hinders that he may *know the things of God*, that is (as appears by Ver. 9.) *the things that God has prepared for them that love him*, as fully and perfectly as the Spirit of a Man knoweth the Designs and Counsels of a Man towards other Men? Cannot God as fully reveal those *things of God* to this holy and super-eminent Spirit, as any Man knows his own Will and Designs of Good towards others? and is it not thus, that our Saviour also is said to know the things of God? *Rev.* 1. 1.

If it be demanded, If this be all, Why is the Spirit called *the Spirit of God?* I hope the Vindicator knows, that 'tis the manner of the Hebrew Tongue to name things great in their kind, by the name of God. He may also be called *the Spirit of God*, as Prophets are in Scripture called *the Men of God*, because both one and the other *are sent by God*. And this Spirit is so much the Chief of all other Spirits, that are God's Messengers; that he is therefore sometimes called by way of Eminence and Excellence, *the* Spirit of God. So an *Arian* or *Bidellian* Unitarian would answer to the Objection from this Text. How a *Socinian* Unitarian would answer, may be seen in the Brief History, from *p.* 98, to *p.* 102.

The CONCLUSION.

THus I have consider'd Dr. *Sherlock*'s new Explication of the Doctrines of the Trinity and Incarnation by Self-consciousness and Mutual consciousness, and therein the substance and force of his Book, which he has so vainly and untruly called *a Vindication* of those Doctrines. His Book can deserve that Title in no other sense, but as 'tis a supercilious, disdainful, and peevish Answer. But for that, the Unitarians know very well, that when Learned Men rage in such a manner, that they have neither Humanity nor good Manners left, 'tis *because they find themselves pinch'd:* they know too, that *Omnis Renegada est Ordinis sui Persecutor.* Those who have hitherto said (who are all that have read his Books) there is nothing considerable in Dr. *Sherlock*'s Books, but what he either borrowed from the *Socinians*, or build upon their Foundation; such will wonder he would shew no better Reasons why he hath shifted sides. He promised at *P.* 21. *to examine the Brief Notes Paragraph by Paragraph, that the Author might not complain of unfair Usage:* But at *p.* 256, before he was got half through the Notes, he pretends to grow *weary of the Note-maker's long Harangues* (tho the whole Notes are less than a Sheet of Paper) and so gives his Reader only so much of the Brief Notes as he fancied he could deal withal. Therefore the Author of the Notes will say, this was not only unfair, but (after a Promise) *false Usage:* Others say, the Doctor grew self-conscious, sensible of his Inability, and therefore durst not trust his Reader with those dangerous Notes, and his crude Answer to them. But where he pretended to answer, he should not have suppressed so many Periods, nor omitted to take notice of *the Reason* used, supposing it was enough if he opposed *the Doctrine.* Least of all should an Answerer of his standing and Reputation in Polemic Squabble, have quietly past by some whole Paragraphs, the most material in the Notes; or only cast a bald squeez'd Jest at 'em.

As to the slight *Quirks* which he sometimes opposes to the *Arguments* in the Notes and History, there is an Answer preparing, and almost finish'd, to every thing in his Book, to be publish'd, unless in his next he is content to own *he desires it not.* For as to the Unitarians themselves, they are upon several accounts not forward

ward to publish a farther Answer. First, they foresee, that the Vindication is not a Book, by which the Church of *England*, or any other Party of the Trinitarians, will abide; they look for another kind of Answer, and therefore reserve their Defences to a time and occasion that may more require them. Another Reason is, they dare trust the History and Notes with the Doctor's Answer, though he durst not trust his Answer with the Notes; only they desire the Reader to read the Notes and History as they are publish'd by them, in entire Discourses, not as they are mangled, and cut into Thongs by the Vindicator. They are confident that no discerning Man who shall read Dr. *Sherlock*'s Vindication, and afterwards read again the Notes of History, as they are publish'd by the Unitarians, but will find himself as much troubled to untie *the Gordian Knots*, as if they had never read *the Solutions* of the Vindicator. But I will conclude with him, with only observing something to what he has, with his usual Charity and Sagacity, objected to the Hopes of Salvation in the Unitarian way.

The Note-maker had said, that, 'In these 'Points which have been always controverted 'in the Church of God, 'tis not necessary to 'Salvation, that a Man happen to be of the 'right Perswasion; 'tis sufficient if he use *reasonable Diligence* to be informed; if after that 'he mistakes, he is in *no fault at all*, his Error is '*pure Ignorance*, not a culpable Ignorance; for 'how can it be culpable not to know that, of 'which a Man is ignorant *after a diligent and* '*impartial Inquiry?* To this the Vindicator answers in several Pages, but all *the Argument* of his Answer is in these words, 'Then how 'comes an Atheist, a Turk, or a Jew to be in 'any fault? Does the Note-maker think that 'no Atheist, Turk, or Jew ever used *reasonable Diligence?* And why should not their 'reasonable Deligence serve their turns; as 'well as the reasonable Diligence of *Socinians*, and other Hereticks? — And does not 'the Reason he gives, extend *to the whole* '*Christian Religion*, as well as to those Points 'that (he says) have been always controverted in the Churches of God?

To this Complement of the Vindicator, I answer. 1. I do not think Atheism ever was *the abiding* Sentiment of any Man, who took time to consider; and I deny that any Atheist ever used *reasonable*, or but tolerable *Diligence to be informed*. 2. As to Jews and Turks, who believe and worship the one true God, and him only; perhaps they are in a nearer Proximity to Salvation than such, as against sufficient Opportunities of a right Information, add for Worldly Interests have apostatized from the Christian Faith, to the Athanasian. 3. Those that deny *the whole Christian Religion*, after having known it and the Reasons of it, the Notemaker is assured whatever *Diligence* they may have used, they have not made (as the Notes expressly require) an *Impartial Inquiry*. They have been *byassed* by their Prejudices, or their Lusts, *against the whole Christian Faith*; as others (we see) are byassed against *the most Essential* Parts of it, the Unity of God, *his Infinite* Sapience, Goodness, Justice, and Power, *his real* Omnipresence, the Liberty of our Wills to Good and Evil. If the Vindicator thinks otherways, let him speak out, and plainly tell the World his Mind; that a Man may have used *reasonable Diligence*, and also made *an Impartial Inquiry*, and yet disbelieve *the whole Christian Religion*. This, I hope, may be enough to Dr. *Sherlock* at present.

As for Mr. *Savage*, who hath also written against the Brief Notes, if he had pleased to write after an intelligible manner, he seems to be a Person that might have deserved a careful Answer: But having wrapt himself up in a School-Cloud, and wrote in such towring Metaphisicks, as are much above ordinary or unlearned Capacities; I am sensible that, with respect to the Unitarian Cause, his Book can do neither good nor hurt. However, the Unitarians thank him for his design to inform and instruct them; and they desire him not to take it amiss, if they also advise him, that the next time he writes for the Information of the *Illiterate* and *Vulgar*, he would write more intelligibly. For,

Learning's Light, when held too high, goes out.

THE END.

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OR, AN

ALPHABETICAL TABLE

OF ALL THE

CITIES, MARKET-TOWNS, PARISHES, VILLAGES, and PRIVATE SEATS;

IN

ENGLAND

AND

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